

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

“Service within and beyond our borders”

Annual Report 1999

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is to promote and defend worldwide the interest of Guyana as follows:

- (a) the preservation of the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Guyana;
- (b) the promotion of the economic and social development of Guyana through financial and technical assistance;
- (c) the promotion of trade;
- (d) extending assistance to Guyanese in Guyana and abroad;
- (e) the maintenance of friendly relations between Guyana and the nations of the world;
- (f) ensuring that Guyana's interests are made known and understood at all levels of international affairs;
- (g) the promotion of the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Report presents an overview of the activities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs over the period January to December 1999. It highlights the activities that were undertaken by the Department of the Americas and Asia, the Economic Affairs Department, the Multilateral and Global Affairs Department, the Administration and Finance Department and the Protocol and Consular Affairs Department. The major activities of Guyana's eleven overseas diplomatic missions for 1999 are also included.

It was a year which featured changes in leadership at several levels. A new President H.E. Bharrat Jagdeo assumed the reigns of leadership following the resignation of incumbent President Janet Jagan in August. There were also leadership changes within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a new Director General was appointed and new Heads of Mission were assigned to Guyana's Embassies in Brazil and Cuba, the High Commission in Ottawa and the Guyana Consulate in Toronto. A number of changes also occurred at the level of representational staff at several of Guyana's overseas missions. It was against this background that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its overseas Missions endeavoured in 1999 to achieve the objectives of the Ministry.

During the year under review former President Janet Jagan continued to pursue the goal of strengthening Guyana's bilateral relations with its neighbouring countries. In this regard, the President traveled to Venezuela in February to attend the inauguration of President Hugo Chavez and in March Guyana welcomed Foreign Minister José Vicente Rangel who headed a delegation for the inaugural meeting of the Guyana-Venezuela High Level Bilateral Commission. President Jagan undertook a State Visit to Brazil in May for high-level discussions with President Fernando Enrique Cardoso and also visited the State of Roraima which was desirous of intensifying linkages with Guyana, mainly through the road to Brazil. In June 1999, with the support of the Federative Republic of Brazil, Guyana concluded a Memorandum of Understanding with MERCOSUR by which this country was granted Associate Membership of that economic grouping. Additionally, it was during this year that Guyana received the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Suriname, Mr. Errol Snijders who led a delegation to review the progress of the Guyana-Suriname Cooperation Council.

October 1999 marked the 100th Anniversary of the Arbitral Award settling the border

between Guyana and Venezuela. Guyana was forced to make international protests when, under the pretext of Anniversary observances, Venezuelan aircrafts conducted unauthorized overflight activities.

Bilateral relations with the wider Latin American region were steady with the most significant level of activity occurring in Guyana's cooperation programme with Cuba. The highlight was the celebration of the XX Session of the Guyana-Cuba Joint Commission and the signing of a Bilateral Agreement on the Promotion and Protection of Investments between the two countries. In addition after many years a number of Guyanese students were able to accept offers for higher studies in Cuba under the aegis of the CARICOM-Cuba Joint Commission.

In respect of hemispheric relations, Guyana's Head of State attended the first ever Summit of the European Union, Latin America and the Caribbean in Rio de Janeiro in Brazil in June. Guyana as the Caribbean Community's representative on the Rio Group participated in the joint preparatory meetings for the Summit and the President of Guyana delivered a Statement on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean Group of countries on the subject "Trade Negotiations and Liberalization". Also of note during the year were the visits of the Secretary-General and Director General of the Andean Community in August and the Secretary General of ALADI in November. Relations with CARICOM centred on monitoring the process of revision of the Treaty of Chaguaramas while monitoring also continued in respect of the ACS, the OAS and other hemispheric organizations to which Guyana belongs.

During the year under review the Ministry continued to pursue economic relations with Asia. The Seventh Session of the Guyana-China Joint Commission took place in March and relations with Japan, India, Malaysia and Korea among other countries remained stable. Diplomatic relations were established with Indonesia (and Malta).

There were major achievements for Guyana during the year under review at the level of the United Nations for it was the year that Guyana assumed Chairmanship of the Group of 77 and China. Guyana's chairmanship was assumed at a time when the Group was planning for the first ever Summit of South Countries to be held in Havana in April 2000. In this regard, Guyana convened two major fora during the year in support of this process. These activities were an Informal High Level Consultative Meeting held in Guyana in September and a Meeting

of Eminent Persons which took place in December. This was also the year in which Guyana commenced serving its three-year term on the Executive Board of UNICEF.

1999 was the year in which the 3rd Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organisation took place in Seattle, Washington. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was the coordinator at the level of NACEN for Guyana's participation in this activity, held from November 30-December 3. The Ministry was also chief coordinator for Guyana's participation in the Fifth Ministerial Meeting of FTAA held in Toronto. There was careful monitoring of ACP-EU trade relations for a successor arrangement for the Lomé IV agreement that was set to end in February 2000. It was also the year when, for the second time in its history, ACP countries participated in a Summit meeting in the Dominican Republic in November.

During the year under review the Ministry of Foreign Affairs continued to pursue its mandate of coordinating donor assistance provided by the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund, the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation and similar organizations. The Ministry also continued its coordinating role with regard to international volunteer organizations, namely Voluntary Service Overseas, United Nations Volunteers and Peace Corps. Additionally, the Ministry was successful during 1999 in attaining partial computerization and internet access.

DEPARTMENT OF AMERICAS AND ASIA

Review of Performance of the Department for 1999

The projections for the Department's major focus and activities in 1999 were as follows:

- **Safeguarding the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Guyana** – through the maintenance of cordial relations with the frontier countries and the implementation of, and completion of cooperation agreements with those countries.
- **The promotion of bilateral relations with key countries in the Americas and Asia.**
- **Involvement in Regional and Institutional Bodies:**
CARICOM, the ACS, the OAS, the Rio Group and the Summit of the Americas.
- **Coordination of Agreements and Activities relating to cooperation in the fight against illegal drugs.**

THE AMERICAS

Brazil

The Department was involved in preparations for the visit of HE President Janet Jagan to Brazil.

A Visa Abolition Agreement for holders of Diplomatic, Service and Official Passports and an Agreement on performance of remunerated activities by dependents of diplomatic, consular, administrative and technical staff were concluded between the Governments of Guyana and Brazil.

The draft Agreement on cooperation between the Guyana Police Force and the Federal Police of Brazil was submitted to the Government of Brazil.

The inaugural meeting of the Guyana/Brazil Working Committee on Drugs was not convened. The establishment of the Working Committee was decided upon at the Inaugural meeting of the Guyana/Brazil Group on Consular Cooperation held from November 24 – 25, 1994 (Georgetown). The Ministry is currently awaiting a response from Brazil with respect to the convening of this meeting.

The meeting of the Guyana/Brazil Group on Consular Cooperation is also to be convened.

Venezuela

The Department assisted in the preparations for the visit of the Foreign Minister of Venezuela for the establishment of the Guyana-Venezuela High Level Bilateral Commission (HLBC) in March.

The Public Service strike in Guyana resulted in a stagnation of efforts to meet the stipulated schedule of the Work Programme of the HLBC. Domestic preoccupations in Venezuela prevented the Government from paying particular attention to the implementation of the Work Programme also. Following the annual meeting between the Foreign Ministers of Guyana and Venezuela in New York in September, it was agreed that every effort should be made for the Sub-Committees to meet.

To that end, the Working Group on Drugs met from November 15 – 16 in Georgetown. Meetings of the Sub-Committees on Health and the Technical Working Group on Marine Resources also met during the month of November.

The following Sub-Committee Meetings will have to be re-scheduled for 2000:

- Consular Matters (Venezuela)
- Agriculture, Livestock and Agro-industry (Guyana)
- Trade and Economic Cooperation (Guyana)
- Political Consultation (Venezuela)
- Culture (Venezuela)

Transportation (Guyana)
Environment (Guyana)

The response of the Government of Guyana to the proposed draft Agreement on Reciprocal Employment of Spouses and Dependents was prepared in consultation with the Attorney General's Chambers and the Legal Adviser and is to be submitted to the Government of Venezuela.

With the observance of the 100th Anniversary of the 1899 Arbitral Award on October 3, the profile of Guyana-Venezuela relations was given even greater prominence than usual in both Guyana and Venezuela. A Statement was prepared and issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Guyana on the occasion of the Anniversary.

During the same period, the incursion of Venezuelan troops into Guyana's territory on the border resulted in a formal protest from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Guyana and the issuance of statements to the media.

Given the sensitivity of the issue, the Ministry also sent formal communication to the Secretary General of CARICOM, the then Personal Representative of the UN Secretary General and to the Secretary General of the Commonwealth.

Friendly Governments were also briefed, including Brazil, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

The Second Sitting of the Assembly of Caribbean Community Parliamentarians also passed a Motion laid by the Guyana representatives, supporting Guyana in the face of Venezuela's claim.

The President of Guyana took the opportunity to brief his CARICOM and Commonwealth Colleague Heads of Government at their Summit Meetings in October and November respectively. Statements emanated from both forums reiterating support for the Government of Guyana. The CARICOM Heads of Government further endorsed the resolution passed by the Assembly of Caribbean Parliamentarians.

It should be noted that the Commonwealth Heads of Government also mandated the establishment of a Ministerial Group on Guyana to monitor the situation regarding the controversy.

A Committee was established by the Honourable Minister to discuss ways in which Guyana could mark the 100th Anniversary of the Arbitral Award.

Arising out of the recommendations, a Motion has been prepared and is to be debated in the Parliament. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs involved all of the Political Parties represented in Parliament in the formulation of the text.

Other recommendations to be acted upon in 2000 include the launching of a commemorative stamp and the updating and reprinting of publications on the controversy.

The Department also monitored developments in Venezuela relating to the drafting of the new Constitution. The new Constitution contains an Article which states that Venezuela will have the same territory as the Captaincy General in 1810 (prior to independence) "with the resulting modifications of treaties and arbitral awards not marred by nullity".

These political developments and their significance for Guyana will have to be more closely monitored and analysed by the Department in 2000.

Suriname

The Department was involved in the preparations for the visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Suriname at the end of February to review the progress of the Cooperation Council.

At the political level, the domestic situation in Suriname precluded much movement in the relations between the two countries.

The Guyana-Suriname National Border Commissions were unable to meet. In particular for Guyana, a review will have to be undertaken of the decisions taken from the last meeting and recommendations made for new membership of the National Commission before any

meeting with Suriname can take place. This should be a priority for 2000.

The Working Group on Drugs did not take place as scheduled this year. An evaluation of the process of the implementation of decisions taken at the Inaugural and Second Meetings is to be undertaken. It is expected that this will be carried out as part of an exercise to analyse Guyana's approach in implementing bilateral agreements on this issue.

An incident (October) on the Corentyne River involving the firing of shots by Suriname Police and the apprehension of Guyanese by the Surinamese authorities resulted in a formal protest being made to the Surinamese Government.

The finalisation of an analytical review of the characteristics of the relations between Guyana and Suriname will be a priority for the Department for 2000.

Canada

The Department continued to pursue the Ottawa-Georgetown Partnership Programme. A response was received in the latter half of the year to the effect that the programme focussed its efforts in a few selected countries, Guyana not included. The Department is now in the process of informing the Mayor of Georgetown of this latest development.

With regard to deportations (removals), a team from Immigration Canada which visited in February, held discussions with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Progress relating to the Deportation Agreement between Guyana and Canada was minimal. The Ministry sought to ascertain the views of some CARICOM Member States on similar agreements signed between those States and Canada.

The Department will continue to pursue this matter in 2000.

United States of America

The Agreement on employment of the spouses of Members of Diplomatic Missions and Consular Officers has been reviewed and the Government's response to the US proposals will shortly be forwarded to the Embassy. It is hoped that this matter can be concluded early in 2000.

An Agreement was signed between the two countries on cooperation in the fight against drugs.

The Ministry was also involved in matters pertaining to the Caribbean Support Tender of which the Government of Guyana has since agreed to be a participant.

The Department was also required to respond to certain requests made by the US Embassy on Guyana's position on particular issues.

Latin America

The Department assisted in the preparation of a paper on developing relations with Latin America. This paper has been submitted to Cabinet for the consideration of a number of recommendations for a strategic foreign policy approach to target those countries with which Guyana already has a firm programme of cooperation and those which have influence in regional groups and the hemisphere as a whole; as well as to review and extend Guyana's diplomatic accreditation through the Latin American region.

It is expected that following Cabinet's ruling, the Department would be guided in terms of its focus on relations with specific countries in Latin America for 2000.

The Department also prepared for submission to Cabinet, a Memorandum on the partial abolition of visas with countries in Latin America and the Dominican Republic. Following a decision taken by Cabinet on this subject, the Department is now in the process of preparing draft letters of Agreement to be sent to the Central American countries and the Dominican Republic.

To facilitate the continuation of this exercise in 2000, a review of countries with which such Agreements exist/do not exist will be undertaken in 2000 in close consultation with the Protocol and Consular Department.

CARICOM

The Department was engaged in preparation for, participation in and follow up from a number of meetings of the Community. These included the Budget Committee meeting, the first Meeting of Senior Officials of CARICOM Foreign Ministries, the Heads of Government Intersessional Meetings, the Regular Meeting of the Heads of Government, Meetings of the Council for Foreign and Community Relations (Regular and Extraordinary) and meetings of the Inter-Governmental Task Force charged with the revision of the Treaty of Chaguaramas.

In collaboration with the CARICOM Secretariat, the Department was engaged in carrying out a public education exercise on the Single Market and Economy. This exercise included preparatory meetings with Government/Civil Society and the media. A media seminar was subsequently held (October 19) followed by the public education exercise at Uitvlugt (October 28) and Linden (October 29 and November 29). The team included officials from the CARICOM Secretariat and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

New dates for Berbice, Essequibo and Georgetown are to be finalised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in collaboration with the CARICOM Secretariat, the respective Chambers of Commerce and the Regional Democratic Councils.

The Department prepared for submission to Cabinet and to the National Assembly, papers pertaining to the ratification of Protocols III (Industrial Policy) and V (Agricultural Policy). Following acceptance of the Motions laid in Parliament by the Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs the Department is now in the process of preparing the Instruments of Ratification to be deposited at the CARICOM Secretariat.

The Department prepared for submission to Cabinet, a Memorandum pertaining to the ratification of Protocols IV (Trade Policy), VI (Transportation Policy) and VII (Disadvantaged Countries, Regions and Sectors).

A team is expected to arrive in Guyana for the Public Education Exercise on the Caribbean Court of Justice in 2000.

With the Consultancy for the design and construction of the CARICOM Permanent Headquarters Building soon to be awarded, the Ministry will continue to be closely involved in the execution of this Project.

A number of applications were received in 1999 for the issuance of Certificates of Skills Qualifications. With the Single Market and Economy becoming a reality in 2000/2001, it would be necessary for the Ministry to address the question of revenue from the provision of this service. This matter has already been considered by the Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs and is to form part of the Department's Work Programme for 2000.

Following the formation of the National Committee for the Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD) in March, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was given the responsibility of coordinating the Committee. A number of meetings were convened to discuss issues in preparation for the COHSOD and matters relating to the human resource development process.

The Ministry was represented on Guyana's delegation to the Officials Meeting in preparation for the Third Meeting of the COHSOD (October). The Ministerial Meeting did not take place and is now scheduled for January 2000.

At the beginning of 1999, it was envisaged that as the Ministry endeavoured to encourage partnership between the Government and the Social Partners in the conduct of Community activities, particular attention would be paid to the establishment of a mechanism at the national level, to monitor the recommendations of the Charter of Civil Society. Despite its importance, it was not possible for the Department to address this particular subject in 1999.

It should be noted however, that while the mechanism has not yet been addressed, elements of the Charter with regard to the involvement of the Social Partners have been given due recognition as evidenced by the Special Retreat held by HE the President with the Business Community in October.

The Department was engaged in preparations for the IV CARICOM-Central America Ministerial Meeting (March) and the VII CARICOM-Japan Consultation (November) held in Guyana.

Association of Caribbean States

The Department assisted in preparations for the II Summit through attendance at preparatory meetings, review of Summit Declaration and Plan of Action and the preparation of briefs for the President and delegation.

The Department disseminated information and documentation relating to the work of the various Special Committees to the subject Ministries/Government Departments however there was hardly any response from these bodies regarding the action required to be taken in specific areas.

The Ministry represented Guyana at the Budget Committee Meeting and the Intersessional Meeting. The Honourable Minister attended the Fifth Ministerial Council Meeting (Panama, December 12 – 13).

As part of an exercise to review the work and function of the Association, which was undertaken by the ACS, the Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs held a meeting with the Consultant Mr Frank Campbell on November 22 during which his views and those of the Ministry were articulated. The report of the Consultants was presented to the Fifth Ministerial Council Meeting. The Department will be analysing this report with a view to further action.

A planned review of action taken by Guyana thus far in relation to the ACS Work Programme has not been completed by the Department, mainly due to the lack of responses from the respective Government Ministries/Departments.

Organisation of American States

The Ministry convened (May) at the request of Cabinet, a Seminar to assist in the formulation of the Government's response to the ratification of the Inter-American Convention against Corruption. A Cabinet Memorandum has been submitted.

After representation at several levels of Government, the OAS finally agreed to transfer the 1998 funds for the INSAP Project to the 1999 Budget. Meanwhile, discussions were initiated with the Government of Colombia for technical assistance with regard to this Project.

Four National Projects were submitted to the OAS for funding in 2000:

- (i) Enhancing a better social and economic environment.
- (ii) Amerindian Community-based tourism development.
- (iii) An integrated development plan for the Intermediate Savannahs of Guyana based on agricultural and agro-ecotourism enterprises.
- (iv) The development of a methodology for mitigating inter-cultural conflict.

The Government signalled its interest in participating in a number of multilateral projects (approximately 24).

Amerindian Community-based tourism development was recommended for funding. However it was not accepted. According to the Embassy's report, in attempting to justify its list of projects chosen for funding, the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development indicated that there were insufficient funds for the execution of all the projects recommended by the CENPES and that the Secretariat chose projects for funding based on their order of precedence as established by the percentage points given by the CENPES.

Further, the Ministry has since requested a re-evaluation of the project "Strengthening the technical capability of the CCST to promote technological development, technology transfer and science and technology policy development for the Caribbean" and "Enhancing a better social and economic environment".

Rio Group

The Department has finalised an analysis on Guyana's representation of CARICOM on the Rio Group. This paper benefitted from comments from Guyana's Embassies in Brazil, Belgium and Venezuela.

Given the activities leading up to the LAC-EU Summit, the Rio Group's activities for the year were focussed on preparations for this Summit.

The Department was involved in preparations for the LAC-EU Summit in conjunction with Guyana's Ambassador in Venezuela.

Summit of the Americas

The Department has prepared a synopsis of the Summit of the Americas Process with specific recommendations relating to Guyana's focus.

White Helmets Initiative

A Cabinet Memorandum was prepared requesting consideration of Guyana's involvement in the Initiative through the presentation of proposals to the programme of Volunteers for Humanitarian Assistance in Latin America – White Helmets Initiative.

ASIA

More attention was placed on the development of economic relations with key countries in Asia – China, Japan and South Korea. As such, the Department worked in close collaboration with the Economic Affairs Department.

With regard to India, the Ministry finalised its response to the proposal from the Government of India for the conclusion of an Agreement on Inter-Ministerial Consultations

between the Foreign Ministries of the two countries.

The Ministry was represented at a Seminar on Partnerships toward the Twenty-First Century for the Latin American and Caribbean Countries in Seoul, South Korea (December 2 – 11). This Seminar provided an opportunity for a first hand knowledge of the current policies being adopted by the Government of Korea at the political, economic and social levels, particularly now that the country is reviving from the international financial crisis. The country is now looking to establish closer and more beneficial relations (trade and other forms of cooperation) with other countries. While the Latin American and Caribbean countries are being targetted, it should be noted that they are also exploring cooperation with the CIS countries. Apart from capitalising on the overtures being made, there is also scope for cooperation between the FSI and the Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security (IFANS). (IFANS holds joint Conferences, Seminars with other institutes in the US, Japan and Russia and is promoting exchanges/joint researches with other institutes in Egypt, Peru and Iran.)

The work of the Department suffered in this area due to the fact that only one officer is currently assigned to the Asia desk.

COORDINATION IN THE FIGHT AGAINST ILLEGAL DRUGS

The Ministry convened a meeting of the International Relations Sub-Committee of the National Anti-Narcotics Commission (August). The opportunity was taken to make recommendations regarding the approach to be adopted by the Government in its involvement in bilateral and regional activities.

It was agreed that a meeting would be convened under the Chairmanship of the Minister of Home Affairs to review all of the agreements signed at the bilateral level as well as the decisions taken at the various meetings of the Working Groups convened to ascertain the level of implementation.

GENERAL

The Department also prepared National Day Messages, congratulatory messages, as well as briefs and speeches for the accreditation and visits of Ambassadors/High Commissioners during the year under review.

ECONOMIC AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT

MISSION AND OBJECTIVES OF THE EAD

The year 1999 was a very productive year for the Economic Affairs Department, since the department was able to accomplish a number of tasks assigned towards the improvement of an enhanced economic relationship with a number of countries.

THE AMERICAS

BRAZIL

1999 was a very satisfactory year for Guyana-Brazil bilateral relations. The highlight was the State Visit of Her Excellency Janet Jagan to Brazil in May. The Economic Affairs Department was responsible for coordinating, at the inter-agency and intra-Ministry level, the Economic and Technical Cooperation briefs for this visit, including the background for Associate Membership of MERCOSUR. The department also continued its coordinating role with respect to preparations for the Guyana-Roraima Institutional meeting in Boa Vista on the subject of the Guyana-Brazil Road Link. Several inter-agency meetings were convened at the Ministerial and Officials level in preparation for this meeting which has since been postponed by the Brazilians to the new year.

The Ministry also received the visit of an inter-disciplinary evaluation team from the Brazilian Cooperation Agency during the period August 9-13, 1999. The team held meetings with officials of the National Dairy Development Programme, the Crops and Fisheries Division of the Ministry of Fisheries, Crops and Livestock as well as the Hydromet Division of the Ministry of Agriculture.

Discussions were also held with the Ministry of Health, the Guyana Geology and Mines Commission, the Guyana Forestry Commission and the INSAP programme. This mission

was successful and provided a firm basis on which immediate cooperation could be expanded. Projects are to be submitted to ABC early in 2000.

MEXICO

The department continued to monitor cooperation initiatives in this area. During 1999 the department forwarded five (5) project proposals submitted by the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Industry for the consideration of the Mexican Authorities. Responses were received from the Mexicans with regard to the proposal submitted by the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports indicating that they were prepared to send two experts and receive a team from Guyana. The Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports responded to this proposal indicating that the dates proposed by the Mexicans authorities were inconvenient and further proposed dates. It seems that Ministry of Culture already submitted dates during the month of July for the consideration of Mexico.

The Ministry is still awaiting a response from the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports on possible new dates to commence this activity.

The Ministry is still awaiting a response from the Mexican authorities with regard to the proposals submitted by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Industry.

During the year under review a team from the Guyana Geology and Mines Commission visited Mexico to undertake cooperation activities in the area of mining. A report was submitted by the Guyana Geology and Mines Commission on the outcome of the visit. This report was transmitted to the Mexicans for their consideration and necessary action. The Ministry is still awaiting a response on this subject.

CHILE

Cooperation in this area during the year has been dormant. However, an officer from

the Ministry benefited from training in Chile during the year through the CARICOM/Chile scholarship modality.

COLOMBIA

During the year the Ministry continued consultations with the Colombian Embassy with a view to identifying mutually convenient dates for the hosting of the Second Session of the Guyana/Colombia Joint Commission. The Ministry is still awaiting a response from the Colombian Embassy on possible dates.

FRENCH GUIANA

During January the Ministry submitted for the consideration of the French authorities a proposal for a Ministerial visit to the Department of Cayenne. At the end of the fiscal year the Ministry was still awaiting a response from the French authorities on this proposed initiative.

THE CARIBBEAN

CUBA

The highlight of Guyana/Cuba activities during the year under review was the hosting by Guyana of the XX Session of the Guyana-Cuba Joint Commission. This activity was a success and also concluded with the signing of a Bilateral Agreement on the Promotion and Protection of Investments between the two countries.

The new Joint Commission Programme provides for an expanded Medical Brigade, Cooperation in Fisheries, Crops and Livestock, Tourism, Education, Sports, Communication, Trade Promotion and Housing.

1999 saw the retention of the services of the 17-member team of doctors and

technicians at hospitals in Georgetown, Essequibo and New Amsterdam. The services of three Cuban physiotherapists were also obtained.

The two sides continued to pursue initiatives for cooperation in the areas of housing and sports and to negotiate for scarce medical skills such as Cancer Specialists. Relations between the Guyanese and Cuban business sectors were also intensified in 1999, particularly cooperation between GNIC and UEM.

Another highlight of the year was the departure of four (4) Guyanese for higher studies in Cuba under the aegis of the CARICOM-Cuba Joint Commission. This was a positive development since Guyana had not taken up any of these offers in recent years. Three students will be pursuing courses in Medicine and one in Civil Engineering.

COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA

On two separate occasions during the year the Ministry tried to initiate consultations with the Dominican authorities towards the convening of the Inaugural meeting of the Guyana/Dominica Joint Commission.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

During the year the Ministry submitted a draft Agreement for the intensification of Economic, Technical, Cultural and Scientific Cooperation between the Governments of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana and the Dominican Republic. The Ministry is still awaiting a response from the Dominican authorities.

VENEZUELA

The highlight of the year in terms of Guyana/Venezuela Bilateral Relations was the official visit of the Venezuelan Foreign Minister H. E. José Vicente Rangel for the Inaugural Meeting of the Guyana/Venezuela High Level Bilateral Commission in Georgetown, Guyana

on 30th March. The Economic Affairs Department was responsible for the coordinating of this meeting.

The High Level Bilateral Commission provides for the establishment of nine Sub-committees in the areas of Health, Consular Matters, Agriculture, Livestock and Agro-industry, Trade and Economic Cooperation, Political Consultations, Culture, Transportation, Environment, Drugs and the Technical Working Group on Marine Resources.

Following the inauguration of the High Level Bilateral Commission in March, three Sub-committees have since convened meetings. The department also facilitated the hosting of a team from Venezuela for the inaugural meeting of the Technical Working Group on Marine Resources. The Sub-committees on Health and Drugs also held their inaugural meetings during the period November 26 to December 3, 1999.

The Sub-committee on Health has agreed that the next meeting will take place during the first quarter of 2000, the Sub-committee on Drugs during the first quarter of 2000 and the Technical Working Group on Marine Resources during the first half of next year.

JAMAICA

Cooperation between the two sides during the year has been dormant. The department is reviewing measures aimed at resuscitating the cooperation relationship between Guyana and Jamaica. The department is also exploring the possibility of implementing a capacity building project.

SURINAME

The department played a vital role in convening inter-agency consultations with a number of Ministries/Agencies aimed at reviewing a draft Guyana/Suriname Fishing Agreement which was submitted by the Government of Suriname for the Government of Guyana's consideration. It is anticipated that this draft Agreement would be transmitted to the Surinamese during the first quarter of 2000.

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

1999 saw the intensification of cooperation initiatives between Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago. The department coordinated a number of inter-agency meetings towards this overall objective. In this regard, the Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs and an eighteen member private sector delegation visited the Twin-Island Republic in August to conduct discussions with a number of private and public sector entities towards the enhancement of improved trade relations between the two countries. While in Trinidad and Tobago the Minister of Foreign Affairs signed a Framework Agreement for the Stimulation of Trade, Commercial Cooperation, Joint Venture and Economic and Technical Cooperation between the Governments of Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago.

The third round of negotiations for the Guyana/Trinidad and Tobago Bilateral Fisheries Agreement was concluded from May 1 to 3, in Georgetown.

The Ministry is also awaiting a response from the Trinidad and Tobago authorities for the convening of the fourth and possibly final round of negotiations.

ASIA

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Donation of 50 Walking Tractors

Arrangements were made for the donation of 50 walking tractors to the Ministry of Fisheries Crops and Livestock by the Chinese Ambassador on October 10, 1999.

MOCO MOCO HYDROPOWER PROJECT

The Moco Moco Hydropower Project was officially received by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from the Chinese Government on September 24, 1999. Commissioning of the

Hydropower Station was coordinated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and took place on November 22, 1999.

An agreement was signed in October 1999 for an additional training course of nine months for the Guyanese technicians and engineers to equip them to operate and maintain the Hydro power Station.

JOINT COMMISSION

The Seventh Meeting of the Joint Commission on Economic and Trade Cooperation between the Governments of Guyana and China took place in Georgetown during the period March 14 -17, 1999. Among the significant matters discussed was the provision of Technical Assistance by the Chinese Government for the development of an electronic village in Guyana.

Training

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs continued to facilitate training of Guyanese technicians in China. Four trainees in rice cultivation, edible mushroom cultivation and vegetable production benefitted from such training in 1999.

Polypropylene Bag Project

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs intensified its efforts to resolve the impasse between Wray's Enterprises Inc. and China National Complete Plant Import and Export Corporation. Arrangements were made for a joint inspection of the project by representatives of the Guyanese and Chinese Governments in September 1999.

INDIA

The Guyana/India Joint Commission was rescheduled for the 2000 period because of the hosting of National Elections in India. The department however, continued consultation with the Indian High Commission towards the hosting of the next Guyana/India Joint

Commission. A number of inter-agency meetings have since been convened.

The department also continued to monitor cooperation initiatives under the Indian ITEC Programme.

MALAYSIA

The department continued to facilitate the onward transmission of training course offers received through the Public Service Management.

EUROPE

RUSSIA

Efforts during the year were aimed at renewing the once vibrant relationship which existed between Guyana and the U.S.S.R. A meeting in this regard, was concluded between the Director of the Economic Affairs Department and the Russian Ambassador. Among the existing areas identified for cooperation were the Visa Abolition Agreement, the Education Agreement on mutual recognition of Documents and the agreement for projects at the Bilateral and Multilateral Levels.

EGYPT

During August the Ministry submitted for the consideration of the Egyptian authorities a draft Agreement on Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation after minor modifications were submitted by the Ministry of Legal Affairs, to the original draft received. The Ministry is still awaiting a response from the Egyptian authorities.

COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT

COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT GENERAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SERVICE DIVISION

The year commenced with only the project at the National Drainage and Irrigation Board under implementation. Indeed, this project was scheduled for completion in May 1999 after a one year extension which commenced in May 1998. However, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs successfully negotiated a cost sharing arrangement for further extension of this project to May 2000.

Proposed Projects

In 1998 Guyana submitted six (6) new project proposals for the consideration of the GTASD. However, because of scarce resources the Division was not able to give financial consideration to the projects until late 1999. Approval has been granted for the implementation of the following projects from the list submitted in 1998:

- Adviser to the Foreign Service Institute; and Geographical Information Systems Specialist(Ministry of Housing and Water).

Subsequent to the visit of the Director of the Division to Guyana in October 1999, the following additional projects were approved for implementation:-

- Archival Researcher-Border Information.
- Legal Drafter-Industrial Property Legislation.

Except for the last for which implementation has begun, all the project proposals are in the pre-implementation preparatory stage.

Intellectual Property

During 1999 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs continued its role as Coordinator/Focal Point for Intellectual Property Rights issues. The Ministry played an instrumental role in preparing the necessary documentation for the recruitment of a legal drafter to prepare draft legislation on Industrial Property.

The Ministry also made substantive comments on the draft Copyright Bill and convened several meetings on intellectual property in general.

Indeed, perhaps the high point in the Ministry's activities in the field for the year was the visit from a team of officials from the World Intellectual Property Organisation. The team conducted research on the need for protection of indigenous knowledge and innovations, an issue that Guyana holds as important.

Bilateral Investment Treaties

Bilateral Investment Treaty negotiations were concluded and an agreement signed between Guyana and the Republic of Cuba in September, 1999.

Guyana submitted its proposal for the resolution of the outstanding issues with regard to the proposed Bilateral Investment Treaties with Canada and the United States of America. At year-end, Guyana was still awaiting responses from these two countries.

Andean Community

The Secretary General and Director General of the Andean Community visited Guyana in August 1999. The two officials held discussions with H.E. President Bharrat Jagdeo, the Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs, Officials of the Caribbean Community Secretariat and the Private Sector Community.

During this visit it was agreed that cooperation between Guyana and the member

states of the Andean Community should focus on increased trade, investment and economic cooperation.

Latin American Integration Association (ALADI)

The Secretary General of ALADI made an official visit to Guyana in November 1999. During this visit areas for cooperation and consultations were agreed upon.

At the meetings with H.E. President Bharrat Jagdeo the Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Private Sector Community, it was agreed that there was much scope for cooperation in the areas of trade and investment.

CARIFORUM

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs continued its monitoring role of the Regional Projects funded under the Caribbean Forum of the African, Caribbean and Pacific States. The Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs represented Guyana at the Ninth Meeting of CARIFORUM Ministers which was held in Jamaica in October, 1999.

Peace Corps

Consultations between the Ministry and Peace Corps have not been as forthcoming as in the case of VSO. The Ministry was however, advised of the attachment of ten (10) Peace Corps volunteers in the areas of youth development and education during the third quarter of 99.

Voluntary Service Overseas

The Ministry continues to monitor the valuable contribution made by VSO during the year. Guyana has benefited from the deputation of thirty-one (31) volunteers for the year. The

Ministry has however, for the second time had its request for the deputation of a librarian rescheduled for 2000 after the cancellation of the last volunteers.

Agency for Personal Services Overseas (APSO)

The Ministry submitted a total of twenty-one (21) requests for the attachment of APSO personnel in various fields. A response has not been received on the Ministry's submissions. The Ministry has written to APSO with respect to its submission but no response has been received to date.

Multilateral Unit

A significant achievement for the Multilateral Unit for the year under review was the partial computerization of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including internet access and a Website for the Ministry. The Unit continued to explore options towards the finalization of this initiative in the form of two experts from the UNDP. The two options are to be analysed and a determination on the way forward made in the new year. The year also witnessed the finalization of three project documents-Assistance to the Environmental Protection Agency, Support to Guyana's Chairmanship of the Group of 77 and Assistance to the Guyana National Bureau of Standards in Implementing the Environmental Management Standards. A UNDCP Drug Demand Reduction Programme for Guyana was also signed.

1999 was essentially a year in which several projects passed through the many stages from conceptualization to project preparation. The Rural Education Project is all but complete and ready for signature. A number of others such as Micro-Enterprise Development and Micro-Credit are engaging the attention of the many stakeholders that would be involved in their final formulation and implementation.

This year saw the arrival of a new Resident Representative at the UNDP, Mr. Richard Olver as well as a new Deputy Resident Representative Mr. Mourad Wahba. Throughout the year the Unit continued its efforts to carry out its mandate as Government's focal point in the interface with the UNDP and other representatives of the donor community. It pursued its

monitoring role in respect of the following projects I) Strengthening National Capacity for Poverty Eradication (ii) Building Capacity for Gender Equity in Governance (iii) Health Learning Materials (iv) Integrated Health Sector Development (v) the Sustainable Development Networking Programme and (vi) the Squatter Settlements and Depressed Areas Upgrading Programme. In addition, the Unit effectively carried out its financial responsibilities for a number of projects and provided advice and in-house training to others on the UNDP financial procedures.

As part of on-going efforts to strengthen the capacity of the Unit to carry out its mandate, three additional consultants were recruited to fill vacancies resulting from the loss of two of the department's Foreign Service Officers in January and July. Thus, by the end of the year, the Unit was able to carry out its monitoring role in respect of all Government of Guyana/ UNDP projects particularly those for which the Ministry is not the direct executing agency. These projects included Integrated Health Sector Reform, Drug Demand Reduction, Enabling Activities under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Enabling Activities under the United Nations Bio-Diversity Convention, El Niño Drought Emergency, Poverty Eradication Programme for North Rupununi and Assistance for the Special Select Committee for Constitution Reform inter alia.

Responsibility for implementation of the Capacity Building project, TOKTEN and TCDC remained with the Unit. A number of decisions were made in the course of 1999 with respect to the future of these projects. The Unit and the UNDP constantly searched for solutions at both the officials level and the High Level through which the programming of the country's resource allocation and project implementation could be accelerated in Guyana. Among the more critical decisions was the broadening of the Capacity Building project to serve, in addition to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, other Government Departments. As part of this objective, the Unit procured the services of Ms. Joyce Sinclair, Human Resource Consultant, to conduct an assessment of a selected number of Ministries that are functionally a part of the social sector with a view to determining their managerial and administrative needs in respect of more effectively implementing inter-agency projects. This is one of the inputs that will feed into a new Capacity Building project for the year 2000. 1999 also saw the reallocation of TOKTEN funds and activities from the independent TOKTEN project to a newly created budget line within the Capacity Building project. Three Tokten Consultants were received -all during the second half of 1999. The Guyana National Service and the University of Guyana were the beneficiary institutions.

The Unit, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, pursued the GOG/UNDP decision to modify the original TCDC project document to support Joint Commission activities in keeping with the CCF. A consultancy is in train to finalize a strategy for submission to the UNDP on the use of the remaining resources under the TCDC project. In the course of the year, however, ad hoc requests within the ambit of TCDC were supported and approved to the extent that they were in compliance with the objectives of the CCF.

The Unit continued to oversee the implementation of United Nations Volunteer Programme. Following approval in 1998, the programme has moved from being a multi-sectoral UNV executed project to a uni-sector nationally executed project focussing on health and involving and consisting of 5 UNV specialists within the Integrated Health Sector Development Programme. During the year under review the Ministry received Mr. Howard Wilson, the Preventative/Curative Specialist from the UNV Office in Bonn whose mission in Guyana was to evaluate how Guyana's HIV/AIDS programme could be further assisted as well as the type of support which could be provided in the areas of human rights and governance. 1999 also marked the commencement of regional preparations for the celebration of International Year of Volunteers 2001. The Unit facilitated the participation of two representatives from Guyana in a regional workshop for the preparation of IYV which was held in Suriname. An Advisory Committee, under the leadership of the UNV Guyana Programme, has since been established to commence the coordination of preparations for IYV 2001. The Ministry is a member of this Committee whose first task was coordination of observances for International Volunteer Day which was held on December 5, 1999.

During 1999 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was invited to be part of the National Y2K Committee and the Unit, on behalf of the Ministry, served as Co-Chair together with the Ministry of Finance. The Unit monitored developments in relation to Guyana's preparedness.

Three projects were submitted through UNDP for support under the Turner Fund, but none was successful. The Ministry was advised by UNDP of the extreme difficulty in accessing these resources and the fact that the criteria were constantly being changed by the UN Office.

During the year under review, the department successfully negotiated with UNDP for the recruitment of Mr. Bilika Harry Simamba, Legislative Drafter, for the Constitution Reform process. The Officer has since resigned to accept an appointment in another country and

efforts have been renewed to secure the services of other qualified persons to assist in this process.

Throughout 1999 the Unit was also responsive to requests from the Ministry to explore funding for various initiatives such as the CRNM/IDB Regional Technical Workshop on Government Procurement.

UNICEF

The Government of Guyana/UNICEF Country Programme was originally programmed to end on December 31, 1999. Guyana was successful in obtaining funds for a one-year bridging programme to the end of the year 2000.

Following the departure of Mrs. D. Brady, Mr. Juan Carlos Espinola assumed the reigns of Assistant Representative at UNICEF.

The second half of 1999 was devoted to building a more effective working relationship with the organisation. The main issue under focus was the preparation of the new Master Plan of Operations for the period 2001-2005. In this regard, the Ministry in collaboration with UNICEF hosted a Strategy Meeting with counterparts on December 1 and 2 which was the first in a process towards preparation of this document.

SELA/ECLAC/CDCC

Guyana continued to monitor developments within SELA and ECLAC/CDCC. Guyana was represented by two participants at the SELA/ECLAC seminar on the Incorporation of TCDC Focal Points into the Internet. The Ministry also facilitated the participation of the Civil Defence Commission in SELA's initiative to set up a network of agencies responsible for natural disasters. The Ministry was represented at the Ninth Meeting of the Monitoring Committee of the CDCC in Port of Spain in May and at the XIV SELA meeting on International Technical Cooperation in December.

MULTILATERAL AND GLOBAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT

UNITED NATIONS

The Department continued to play a major role in advancing Guyana's position in multilateral fora, as well as promoting the late President Cheddi Jagan's vision of a New Global Human Order (NGHO).

In this regard, the Department continued to liaise with Guyana's Permanent Mission to the United Nations on several issues including reform of the United Nations and expansion of the Security Council, disarmament and international security, human rights and issues and events relating to United Nations Children Fund.

UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN FUND (UNICEF)

The Department was actively involved in the preparations and follow-up activities relating to the statutory meetings of the Executive Board of UNICEF such as the First, Second and Annual Sessions. Guyana actively participated in the Sessions.

During the year under review, the Executive Board of the United Nations Children Fund approved the extension of the Guyana programme of cooperation for the end of year 2000 to the tune of US\$905,000. Programmes for which continuing support would be provided include health and nutrition, basic education for children and integrated area-based development.

54th UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY (UNGA)

Guyana's concerns were reiterated at the 54th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, when President Bharrat Jadgeo addressed the Session during his first overseas

mission since assuming office in August. This was the President's maiden address at this important Organisation.

During his presentation, President Jadgeo called for cancellation of debts of some poor countries to enable those countries to survive in the world economy. He also called for strengthening democracy, government institutions and the rule of law, as well as rebuilding the foundations for long-term development.

NEW GLOBAL HUMAN ORDER (NGHO)

Guyana, through its Embassies abroad, continued lobbying for the New Global Human Order with a view to possibly tabling a resolution on the item at the United Nations General Assembly.

DISARMAMENT AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

The Department continued to monitor and follow-up issues relating to international peace and security. This year also witnessed continued involvement in negotiations for the signing of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the compliance of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Preparatory and follow-up activities were co-ordinated for the following events:

- Regional Seminar on the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, which was held in Paramaribo, Suriname, March 24-26, 1999.
- Regional Workshop on the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, which was held in Punta Arena, Chile May 31 to June 4, 1999.
- First Annual Meeting of National Authorities of the Chemical Weapons Convention, which was convened in the Hague, the Netherlands, June 26—27, 1999.

- Attachment at the Permanent Mission in New York.

Two Foreign Service Officers II , Mrs. Cherub Nicholls and Mrs. Ashana Indarshan, were attached to the Guyana Permanent Mission in New York from September – December 1999. In addition to the Permanent Representative and staff of the Permanent Mission, the two Officers were also part of Guyana's delegation to the 54th Session of the UN General Assembly.

The Officers benefited from indirect training in multilateral negotiations, participated in negotiations regarding Co-Sponsorship of draft resolutions, of which Guyana co-sponsored 12 resolutions.

EUROPE: POLITICAL AND SOCIAL MATTERS

SWITZERLAND

Guyana and Switzerland signed a non reciprocal visa abolition agreement for Swiss officials in January 1999.

The Swiss Ambassador H.E. Ernest Iten paid a farewell visit to Guyana and held bilateral discussions with several officials during the month of March.

In September the Charge'd' Affaires, Ms Yvonne Bauman visited Guyana and held bilateral discussions with the Director of M&GA and the Desk Officers from both M&GA and EAD.

IRELAND

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Ireland Hon David Andrews, paid an official visit to Guyana from January 3-4, 1999.

SOVEREIGN MILITARY ORDER OF MALTA

Guyana established diplomatic relations with the Sovereign Military Order of Malta in March 16, 1999.

FRANCE

The French Ambassador H.E. Pierre Ariola paid a farewell visit to Guyana during the month of February, 1999.

The Ministerial visit to French Guiana did not materialise. Its objective was to increase bilateral relations with the French Department. A brief was prepared for bilateral discussions with the French President at the EU/LA Summit.

KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS

Documents were prepared for the accreditation of the Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands on February 16, 1999.

AUSTRIA

The Ambassador of Austria paid a farewell visit to Guyana during the month of March.

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

H.E Takhiv B. Durdyev the former Ambassador of the Russian Federation was recalled and documents were prepared for the accreditation of H.E. Igov Prokopyev on June 18, 1999.

Russia/Guyana agreements were monitored for (a) visa abolition and (b) the mutual

recognition of certificates/degrees (The Ministry of Education is yet to produce a copy of Guyana's Education System to facilitate conclusion of this agreement.)

FINLAND

Documents were prepared for the accreditation of the Finnish Ambassador on June 17, 1999. A brief was prepared for bilateral discussions at the EU/LA Summit.

DENMARK

Documents were prepared for the accreditation of the Danish Ambassador Anita Hugau on June 3, 1999.

Denmark provided Guyana with technical assistance through the Inter-American Development Bank Technical Cooperation Programme (Danish Funds) for infrastructural improvement studies for the Cheddi Jagan International Airport.

KIINGDOM OF BELGIUM

Documents were prepared for the accreditation of the Ambassador of Belgium on June 17, 1999.

POLAND

Documents were prepared for the accreditation of the Polish Ambassador on June 10, 1999.

ITALY

A brief was prepared for bilateral discussions with the Italian President at the EU/LA Summit.

GERMANY

A brief was prepared for bilateral discussions with the German President at the EU/LA Summit.

SPAIN

A Spanish delegation including the Director General of Foreign Relations of Latin America, Director General of the Spanish Institute of Cooperation among others visited Guyana and held discussions with the Director General. A brief was prepared for the Spain/CARICOM Summit in June.

SWEDEN

A brief was prepared for bilateral discussions at the EU/LA Summit.

UNITED KINGDOM

The Hon. Reepu Daman Persaud, Minister of Agriculture and Parliamentary Affairs attended a Parliamentary Conference in the UK during the month of February. Through the HIPC agreement, Guyana's debt to the United Kingdom was reduced from US\$72.2 million to US\$53.4 million at the end of 1999.

The Ministry in collaboration with the British High Commission commenced preparations for the visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales in February 2000.

KOSOVO

The Department monitored the situation in Kosovo and a statement was issued by Guyana on April 13, 1999.

The preparation of national day messages for the twenty-nine European countries with which Guyana has diplomatic relations were prepared. Speeches were prepared for national day receptions held by the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and for Europe Day.

Letters and Messages were drafted in the name of the Foreign Minister and the President regarding issues relating to European countries.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In March, 1999 Guyana hosted a Regional Human Rights Reporting Workshop. It drew participants from Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Jamaica and host country, Guyana. The Government, conscious of technical deficiencies in the preparation of these reports, took advantage of the offer by the United Nations to train personnel to more effectively carry out the report writing exercise.

Subsequent to this, there was a meeting of the permanent Inter-Agency Committee on Human Rights in May, 1999, aimed at disseminating information on the Workshop. The knowledge gained from the Workshop would then be used to guide the work of the Committee.

THE DEATH PENALTY

During the 54th United Nations General Assembly, some European Union countries had proposed a resolution calling for a moratorium on the Death Penalty. This was strongly resisted, especially by the Asian and Caribbean countries. The end result was that the resolution was withdrawn.

CANDIDATURES

Guyana continued to lend its support to "friendly" countries particularly CARICOM Member states, in their quest for election to regional and international organisations.

AFRICA (SUB SAHARAN)

During the course of the year, bilateral relations were maintained with the States of this region primarily through the exchange of National Day Messages between the respective Heads of State and Ministers of Foreign Affairs.

This was supplemented by bilateral discussions held during the Commonwealth Summit in Durban in November, for which appropriate Briefs and Talking Points were prepared to facilitate discussions with officials of specific countries e.g. South Africa, Nigeria, Zambia and Ghana.

ACCREDITATIONS

In February, Her Excellency, Thandi Luthuli-Gcabashe presented credentials as Non Resident High Commissioner of South Africa to Guyana to Her Excellency the President, Mrs. Janet Jagan. The High Commissioner is stationed in Caracas.

At the end of the year, the request for Agreement for the Nigerian High Commissioner Designate, was still under consideration.

COMMONWEALTH/UNESCO/PAHO -WHO

Given the importance of multilateralism to Guyana's foreign policy Guyana was able to vis-à-vis:

Host the Heads of the Commonwealth Secretariat and PAHO/WHO in May and July

respectively. The visit of Commonwealth Secretary-General Chief Emeka Anyaoku allowed him the opportunity to meet with local Politicians. Meanwhile, the Director of PAHO/WHO Sir George Alleyne visited Mahdia accompanied by a team of officials from the Ministry of Health and did a needs assessment of Guyana's Hinterland Health Programme.

The Commonwealth Secretary-General has promised Guyana an expert to the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) on a one-year attachment.

Guyana also acceded to the membership of the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM). Guyana's membership to ICCROM would enable Guyana to access relevant experts in the field of preservation of historical buildings, monuments, and cultural artifacts. Guyanese would benefit from training as well.

Guyana has appointed a Commonwealth Contact Person and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was named as the Commonwealth's Primary Contact Point (PCP). FSO Keith George, of the Economics Affairs Department (EAD) was named the Commonwealth's Contact Person. His duties include, advising the Commonwealth Secretariat on matters of general interest relating to requests for development assistance, etal.

Launching of Manifesto 2000 for the Culture of Peace and Non-Violence, October 1, 1999.

This exercise was to encourage thousands of residents in Guyana to access and sign the Manifesto: The Guyana National Commission for UNESCO would total the number of signatures and symbolically hand over the signatures to the United Nation Secretary-General in September 2000 in New York during the UN Millennium Assembly.

AMAZON COOPERATION TREATY/ENVIRONMENT

1999 continued to be an active year for Amazon Co-operation Treaty related activities.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs played an important role in organising and facilitating a number of activities related to the Treaty. These included:

- The Tarapoto Workshop (Guyana) on criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Management of the Amazon Forests.
- Training in Geographic Information System (GIS) for Guyana Technicians
- Prize-giving ceremony for winners of the Art and Essay competitions, commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the Amazon Co-operation Treaty.
- Spanish sessions at the Venezuelan Cultural Centre, for staff members of the Permanent National Commission of the Amazon Co-operation Treaty.
- Meetings of the Permanent National Commission of the Amazon Co-operation - Treaty PNC/ACT and its Sub Commissions.
- Initiating measures to have the Protocol amending Article 22 of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty ratified.

ENVIRONMENT/OTHERS

The Ministry was also instrumental in organising the Third Joint Meeting of the Association of Caribbean States, Special Committees on Protection and Conservation of the Environment, Caribbean Sea and Natural Resources. Further, instruments of acceptance of the amendments to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that deplete the Ozone Layer 1990, 1992, 1997 were prepared to bring Guyana in line with existing international obligations on the control of ozone depleting activities.

The Ministry also continued to play an active role on a number of national committees including the National Bio-diversity Advisory Committee, National Climate Committee and National Bio-Safety Committee.

LEGAL ADVISER

During 1999, the Legal Adviser provided advice to the Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Director General and the Departments within the Ministry.

Requests for advice from other Ministries and Departments were also received and addressed. Several questionnaires on various aspects of Guyanese laws, administrative practices and procedures were received from international organisations and governments and where necessary, inputs were sourced from other agencies to ensure accuracy.

Advice was given on Guyana's obligations under various bilateral and multilateral Conventions between Guyana and other countries were drafted or reviewed.

Inter-Agency meetings, Working Groups and consultations were conducted to discuss Conventions or International Instruments under consideration by Guyana and to elicit the views of various agencies.

Parliamentary Motions were prepared and Instruments of ratification approved by the Legal Adviser where new international obligations were being assumed. Queries and requests for advice for Guyana's overseas missions were also facilitated.

The exercise of the documentary function of the Legal Adviser was required with respect to the authentication of documents, certificates of non-impediment to marriage and CARICOM schedule 11 certificates.

The Legal Adviser also addressed issues related to the handling of extradition and deportation to and from Guyana, Law of the Sea issues, Guyana's reporting obligations under Human Rights Treaties, the enjoyment of Diplomatic Privileges and Immunities by Diplomatic Missions based in Guyana and the status of issues within the judicial system with relevance to the work of the Ministry.

MINISTER'S SECRETARIAT

NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON EXTERNAL NEGOTIATIONS (NACEN)

1999, from the beginning, promised to be an eventful year in the areas of the key negotiations with which the NACEN is duly concerned, namely the World Trade Organization (WTO), Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) and the ACP-EU Post-Lomé IV Arrangements. These matters continued to attract increasing attention at both the regional (Caricom) and national levels, not merely for the involved process of the respective negotiations, but more importantly for the fact that in terms of international trade policy, these specific areas underscore the major planks upon which our external trade policy will be defined in the new millennium.

The World Trade Organization (WTO) is properly established as the bulwark in the global trading system and WTO-compatibility is a standard requirement for members establishing trade relations. The WTO is also quickly acquiring a major role (with the IMF and World Bank) in global economic policymaking. The FTAA, when concluded (in 2005 or thereabout), will impact extensively on trade in the Americas and particularly on Guyana and the Caribbean Community in relation to non-traditional markets in the hemisphere. The ACP-EU post-Lomé IV negotiations (which were concluded in February 2000) will set in train arrangements that will govern the Caribbean's trade (and economic) relations with the European Union for the next twenty-five years, at least.

1999 saw the consolidation of the role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the area of international trade policy and the external trade negotiations. This occurrence has been impacted largely by regional and international trends and the special policy emphasis which the Government of Guyana has placed on trade and economic diplomacy.

The Workprogramme

During the year ended December 1999 the NACEN Secretariat undertook activities consisting of analytical briefs, papers, correspondence and overseas representation as follows:

Globalization and International Trade Policy

The main focus under this theme was the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the key activities undertaken were in relation to the selection and appointment of a (new) WTO Director General and the preparations for the Third Ministerial Conference.

Selection of the Director General

The process which led to the appointment of the current Director General was an extremely contentious and protracted exercise in the General Council in Geneva. Guyana, through its London High Commission and the Foreign Ministry in Georgetown, monitored the situation closely and registered its position on the candidates at the various stages of the selection process. The deadlock which prevailed at one stage between the two frontrunners and final candidates (Thailand and New Zealand) had actually threatened to disrupt the WTO process and the preparations for the 3rd Ministerial Conference. The situation was resolved with the appointment of both candidates to serve, respectively, three year terms from September 1, 1999-August 31, 2002 (NZ) and September 1, 2000-August 31, 2005 (Thailand).

The 3rd WTO Ministerial Conference

The 3rd WTO Ministerial Conference was held in Seattle, USA from November 30-December 3, 1999. The Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs led Guyana's delegation to this Conference.

During the week of November 1-5, 1999 the NACEN Coordinator represented Guyana at a special briefing session for WTO member states that do not have permanent representation in Geneva. This briefing had a positive impact on Guyana's understanding of

the process and the issues as well as the national preparations for the Ministerial conference.

Guyana's national preparations for the Conference were coordinated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the level of the NACEN. The national preparatory process was also linked to the regional preparations in Caricom, involving the Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery (CRNM), and the Group of 77 (in light of Guyana's Chairmanship of that body in 1999).

NACEN members had the benefit of discussing the issues fully at the 6th NACEN meeting which was held on November 19th. The Secretariat had prepared a matrix, setting out the issues against which proposals were being tabled by various countries or groups of countries (including Caricom and Guyana) for agreement by the Conference. The Conference ended inconclusively. Technical work has been scheduled to resume in Geneva in early 2000.

Hemispheric Relations

Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA)

Guyana's participation in the FTAA process has remained fairly consistent and reasonably involved from the inception. In view of the principle of WTO-compatibility in international trade negotiations, the hemispheric negotiations of the FTAA, in several instances, mirror the negotiations in the WTO. The key event in the FTAA calendar in 1999 was the Fifth Ministerial Meeting which was held in Toronto, Canada on November 3-4. Guyana participated at this meeting, which was the first FTAA Ministerial since the negotiation stage commenced in September 1998. The following activities were expedited by the Secretariat:

- Link-up with the FTAA confidential Document Distribution System (Secured website) (May);
- Minister of Foreign Affairs, in a presentation to Cabinet entitled "External Trade and Economic Negotiations: Guyana's Participation in the FTAA – Institutional Arrangements and Programme of Action", outlined the institutional arrangements governing Guyana's preparation for and involvement in the FTAA negotiations (July);

- Collaborated with the Customs Department on the customs-related business facilitation measures to be implemented by FTAA member countries. Eight (8) such measures were adopted by the Trade Negotiations Committee (TNC) and the FTAA Ministerial in November 1999 to be implemented in 2000.

Guyana/Mercosur Relations

The Government of Guyana and the member States (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay) of the Common Market of the South, MERCOSUR, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to pursue cooperation in the areas of trade and investment, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on June 28.

ACP-EU Trade Relations

1999 was a particularly important year for ACP-EU trade relations. The ACP-EU Negotiations for a post- Lome IV Agreement, which were launched in October 1998, were scheduled to be concluded by the end of 1999, bearing in mind that the Lome IV Convention was set to expire in February 2000. Three Joint ACP-EU Ministerial Sessions were convened to cover the negotiations. These were held on February 8-9 (Dakar, Senegal), July 28-29 (Brussels) and December 7-9 (Brussels), respectively.

The NACEN Secretariat maintained a close watch on the negotiation process in collaboration with the Guyana Embassy in Brussels. The Secretariat also monitored closely, developments with respect to the commodities: rice, rum and sugar. On February 17 Her Excellency The President despatched letters to her colleague Heads of State and Government in the European Union in which she outlined the significance of the sugar industry to the Guyana economy and urged their continued support for the Sugar Protocol. Similar letters were despatched on May 18 regarding Rum.

During the First Session of the Seventh Parliament (1998-1999) the Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs tabled a Motion in the National Assembly informing of Guyana's participation in the ACP-EU Negotiations and encouraging the support of the National

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Assembly for the ACP's Negotiating Mandate and Strategy in the Negotiations for a post-Lome IV successor Agreement.

The second Summit of ACP Heads of State and Government was convened in the Dominican Republic from November 25-26. The Secretariat prepared briefs, position papers etc for Guyana's participation.

Following a Decision of the Seventieth Session of the ACP Council of Ministers in November to restructure the ACP Secretariat, Guyana successfully lobbied the support of the Caribbean Group for a Guyanese national in the person of Mr. Carl Greenidge, then ACP Deputy Secretary General, to fill the position of Director of the Technical Center for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) in the new structure. This position was reserved for a nominee from the Caribbean Group in the first instance.

CARICOM MATTERS

Matters involving the NACEN Secretariat with regard to the Caribbean Community concerned mainly the Caricom Single Market and Economy (CSME) and the Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery (CRNM).

Caricom Single Market and Economy (CSME)

The Secretariat collaborated with the Department of Americas and Asia (DAA) in the execution of a number of tasks relating to the CSME and Revision of the Treaty of Chaguaramas.

NACEN Coordinator represented Guyana at the 20th and 21st Meeting of the Inter-Governmental Task Force (IGTF), held in Dominica (April 7-10) and Barbados (April 20-24), respectively.

Preparation of Briefs and position papers for Guyana's attendance at the Twentieth

Conference of the Caricom Heads of Government, held in Trinidad and Tobago on July 3-6 were done.

Preparation of briefs and position papers regarding the Ministry's Input into the Meetings of COTEDn were also done.

Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery (CRNM)

Briefs and position papers for Guyana's attendance at the Tenth Meeting of the Prime Ministerial Sub-Committee on external Negotiations, held in Kingston, Jamaica on January 30 were done.

Guyana participated in a Technical Meeting convened by the CRNM in Barbados on April 19-20, to discuss and agree on Caricom's approach to the issue of Business Facilitation Measures in the FTAA.

Guyana hosted a CRNM Regional Workshop on "Government Procurement" on September 2-4. The objective of the Workshop was to develop a Caricom Framework Paper to guide the region's approach to negotiations on "Government Procurement" in the FTAA as well as the WTO. The Secretariat was responsible for the logistical services which the Government of Guyana, as host, provided to the Workshop. The Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs officiated at the opening of the Workshop.

Guyana participated in a Special Meeting of the COTED which dealt with the External Negotiations involving the WTO, FTAA and the ACP-EU post-Lome IV Arrangements and the region's preparations for the Ministerial Conferences which were held during the latter part of the year. This meeting was held at the Caricom Secretariat on September 9-11. The Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs led Guyana's delegation.

Group of 77 and China

Guyana held the Chair of the Group of 77 and China (G 77) from January 1999 to

January 2000. Guyana's Foreign Minister, the Honourable Clement Rohee, served as the designated Chair during this period. The country's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, H.E. Ambassador Samuel R. Insanally, served as the Group's Chair in New York.

Coordination of the task of the Chairman was conducted between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Georgetown and the Guyana Permanent Mission to the UN in New York. At the Foreign Ministry an internal Task Force was set up and included officers of the NACEN Secretariat. The NACEN Coordinator served as the main contact and resource person on the trade and development matters.

Guyana's contributions to and leadership of the G 77 in 1999 were noted in the following activities:

- A Regional Consultation and Coordination Meeting of the Latin American and the Caribbean countries prior to UNCTAD X, held in Santo Domingo on August 5-6.
- An Informal High Level Consultative Meeting, convened by the G-77 Chairman at State House on September 7-8. The Consultations were aimed at assisting the Chairman in the development of ideas and identification of key elements of a possible strategic and visionary approach by the G 77 to issues of international economic and social development.
- The Ninth Ministerial Conference of the G 77, held in Marrakesh, Morocco, on September 14-16. The overriding position of developing countries regarding the multilateral trading system and the World Trade Organization (WTO) was properly articulated at this meeting by the Group's Chairman, Honourable Clement Rohee, in his call for a "review, repair and reform" agenda for the WTO. This means a review of the implementation problems that confront developing countries, repair or amendment to the Uruguay Round Agreements, and reform of the WTO decision-making process to make it more responsive and enabling to the developing countries, which comprise over 75% of the Organization's membership.
- Meeting of Eminent Persons, convened by the G 77 Chairman in Georgetown on December 6-7. Guyana assumed the Chairmanship of the G 77 at the point where

the Group was planning for the first ever Summit of South Countries, scheduled to be held in Havana, Cuba on April 12-14, 2000. Integral to the Summit process was the need to identify a number of broad issues in which developing countries have shared - even if not equal – concerns, and the development of a set of principles that could inform the articulation of a South vision and programme of action. The specific objective of the meeting, therefore, was to articulate concrete proposals for enhancing the outcomes of the South Summit and inform the critical follow-up work for the South’s development agenda in the new millennium. The G 77 identified five key areas for special attention: Globalization, Knowledge and Technology, South-South Cooperation, North-South Relations and Institutional Follow-up.

Meetings of the NACEN

The NACEN met in four (4) regular meetings and two special sessions during 1999.

The 3rd NACEN Meeting (first for 1999) was held on February 17th. The 4th and 5th Meetings were held on June 21st and August 27th, respectively.

The 6th NACEN Meeting was held on November 19th. This meeting was convened shortly after the Fifth FTAA Ministerial Meeting (Toronto, November 3-4) and immediately ahead of the Third WTO Ministerial Conference (Seattle, November 30-December 3) and the Third Ministerial Session of the ACP-EU post-Lome IV Negotiations (Brussels, December 7-9). The 6th NACEN Meeting, therefore served as the final preparatory meeting among NACEN members for the WTO Ministerial Conference and the 3rd Ministerial session of the ACP-EU Negotiations.

A special inter-agency Meeting on Commodities was held on June 2nd. The objective of this meeting was to facilitate urgent inter-agency deliberations on and appraisal of the situation which existed in the ACP-EU post-Lome IV negotiations with respect to the commodities rice, rum and sugar and agree on next steps to be pursued by Guyana.

On July 2nd a special NACEN Meeting was convened with Guyana’s Ambassador to

Brussels. The Ambassador discussed with NACEN members the ACP-EU Negotiations which were underway for a post-Lome IV successor Agreement.

Other Matters

Guyana/China Trade Relations: The Secretariat examined a proposal from the People's Republic of China for a bilateral trade agreement with Guyana. A counter-proposal was set out in December for transmission to the Chinese. The matter is expected to be concluded in the new year.

EU – Latin America and the Caribbean Relations: A first Summit of the European Union (EU) and Latin America and the Caribbean was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on June 28-29. Guyana, as the Caribbean Community's representative on the Rio Group, participated in the joint preparatory meetings for the Summit. The President of Guyana delivered a Statement on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean Group of countries on the subject "Trade Negotiations and Liberalization." The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was responsible for the preparation of Guyana's participation at the Summit. The NACEN Secretariat collaborated with the other departments in the Ministry in the preparation of the requisite briefs, statements etc.

Training: Technical Officers in the Secretariat benefited from the following training (which was held in the Caribbean):

- CRNM/IDB Workshop on Government Procurement, held in Georgetown on September 1-4, 1999;
- WTO Training Workshop (for Guyana) on the use of the WTO website and secured document distribution facility (ddf) and the establishment of a WTO Reference Center in Guyana (Georgetown, September 23-24);
- Commonwealth Caribbean Workshop on Trade in Services, held in St Kitts & Nevis on September 30-October 2, 1999;

- Regional Workshop on Competition Policy and Law, held at the UWI Campus in Trinidad and Tobago on October 12-13, 1999;
- Workshop on Regional Economic Security Issues, held at the UWI Campus in Trinidad and Tobago in November 1999.

REMIGRANT UNIT

Persons Granted Remigrant Status

During the period January to December, 1999 a total of 159 persons were granted Remigrant Status.

Applications approved in January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November, December, were: 15, 16, 7, 9, 10, 3, 8, 20, 12, 11, 24, and 24 respectively.

Depending on their particular interest some prospective remigrants were also channelled to the Ministry of Agriculture, Guyana Geology and Mines Commission Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Industry and Ministry of Finance.

The perusal of the total number of persons monthly per country is highlighted as follows:

Countries	JN	FB	MR	AP	MY	JU	JY	AU	SP	OT	NV	DC	TOT
USA	5	7	1	5	3	2	4	11	5	4	13	15	75
Canada	1	1	1	1	3	1	2	3	4	1	2	4	24
UK	4	5	3	1	3	-	1	3	1	4	6	3	34
T&T	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2
Jamaica	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	2
Barbados	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2
Kenya	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
B.V. Islands	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2

Switzerland	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Suriname	-	1	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	6
St. Marten	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
India	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Dominica	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Berlin	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Antigua	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	2
French Guiana	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Brazil	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Germany	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Total	15	16	7	9	10	3	8	20	12	11	24	24	159

It is noted that the principal areas of skills/interest of persons granted the 'Remigrant Status' are Businessmen, Engineers, Medical Doctors, Teachers, Accountants, Farmers, Ministers of Religion and Craftsmen.

The remigration scheme is being handled in a business like manner and this Department has strictly followed the given Guidelines.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND INFORMATION UNIT

The Public Affairs and Information Unit sought to achieve of a higher profile for the Ministry through the use of the media and Ministry publications, as well as ensuring that information on Guyana's foreign policy is made available to the public and other interested parties.

In 1999, like in previous years, the unit utilized various communications media in the achievement of its aim of informing public opinion on the formulation and execution of foreign policy.

PRESS RELEASES

The Unit prepared press releases and statements on an on-going basis throughout the year. It was also involved in organizing press conferences given by the Honourable Minister, and collaborated with other departments within the Ministry in the preparation of draft documents, including press releases.

FOREIGN POLICY FOCUS

This weekly radio programme was aired throughout the year and focussed on current foreign policy issues and matters relating to the development of the regional, hemispheric and international systems.

TAKUBA NEWS

The Unit continued the production of "Takuba News", the quarterly publication of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Through this publication, the Unit sought to foster a better understanding of Guyana's foreign policy.

TELEVISION SERIES

The Unit also produced its television series "Towards the twenty-first Century".

PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO MISSIONS AND THE PUBLIC AT LARGE

The unit distributed information, responded to requests by fax and telephone and distributed publications to local prominent individuals and organizations.

PROVISION OF POLICY AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

The unit arranged appointments for the Minister with members of the public, organized public appearances of the Minister, invited media to official activities of the Minister, responded to correspondence on behalf of the Minister, and provided status reports on various issues.

LIAISON WITH LOCAL AND OVERSEAS MEDIA

The unit responded to queries and requests for information regarding the work of the Ministry, arranged visits to Guyana of personnel from overseas media establishments, and provided official information for use by media houses.

LIAISON WITH LOCAL DIPLOMATIC CORPS

The unit organized public appearances of members of diplomatic corps for public awareness purposes and assisted in organizing receptions for the diplomatic corps.

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE DEPARTMENT

ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT

The Department is responsible for support services in the areas of Personnel, Finance, Registry, Maintenance of Equipment, Vehicles, Buildings and General Administration.

The Department is comprised of the undermentioned:

- Administration
- Vehicle maintenance
- Equipment maintenance
- Transport
- Maintenance of buildings
- General maintenance
- Other administration
- Security
- Registry
- Personnel
- Finance (Salaries and Imprest)

During 1999, the Department carried out the functions assigned within its limited capability.

The Finance, Personnel and Registry though understaffed facilitated the work of the Ministry with varying degrees of success.

The Department was also involved in providing administrative support for several conferences/visits hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

The Finance & Budgeting Section on behalf of the Director General effectively managed

the financial operations of the Ministry during 1999 thereby ensuring that they were carried out in accordance with the Financial Administration and Audit Act, Financial Regulations and Circular Instructions.

Current Expenditure for the Ministry is divided into two programmes namely, Programme 1 - Ministry's Administration and Programme 2 - Foreign Relations.

Total Current Budget for the Ministry was B\$1.072 with Revised Provision of B\$1.102 and Capital Budget M\$21.364.

Actual Current Expenditure for 1999 was B\$1.083 and Capital Expenditure M\$21.334. Details are attached at appendices 1-3.

A total of M\$7.888 was collected as Revenue at Head Office and Overseas Missions and paid over to the Accountant General's Department.

PROTOCOL AND CONSULAR AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT

The Protocol and Consular Affairs Department is in the main a service oriented department.

It services the Diplomatic Corps in Guyana consisting of thirteen (13) Missions, thirteen (13) International Organisations and fifteen (15) Honorary Consulates. It also services our twelve overseas Missions, twenty (20) Honorary Consulates and also local Government Ministries/Departments and Guyanese at home and abroad.

GOALS

- Ensure that the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic and Consular Relations is observed;
- Prepare for official visits to and from Guyana
- Facilitate the acquisition of visas for Government officials going abroad on business and members of the diplomatic corps and international organizations coming to Guyana;
- Facilitate access to privileges and immunities by members of the diplomatic corps;
- Assist overseas Guyanese nationals and foreign nationals in Guyana to obtain or verify official documentation and other matters of general welfare;
- Process applications for Diplomatic Passports;
- Ensure that documents are prepared and processed and events are scheduled pertaining to all Agreements, Accreditations, welcome and farewell arrangements for non-resident and resident Ambassadors/High Commissioners;
- Prepare Letters of Credence/Recall;
- Prepare requests for Agreements;
- Maintain an up-to-date Diplomatic List;
- Facilitate approval for overflights and landing rights;
- Prepare Credentials

ACHIEVEMENTS FOR 1999

1. Agreement granted by the Government of Guyana for seven (7) Ambassadors/High Commissioners from foreign countries;
2. Fourteen (14) Ambassadors/High Commissioners have presented their Letters of Credence/Commission to the President of Guyana;
3. Four (4) Ambassadors/High Commissioners paid official visits to Guyana
4. Four (4) Ambassadors/High Commissioners paid farewell visits to the President of Guyana and other Government officials;
5. Farewell receptions were hosted by the Minister of Foreign Affairs for resident Ambassadors/High Commissioners;
6. H.E Mrs Cheryl Miles presented Credentials to the President of the Federative Republic of Brazil
7. H.E. Dr Timothy Crichlow presented Credentials to the President of Cuba
8. H.E. Mr Rajnarine Singh presented Credentials to the Governor General of Canada
9. Mr Danny Doobay appointed Consul General to Toronto, Canada
10. Performed Protocol duties for Guyana's Republic day and its Independence Anniversary celebrations
11. Performed protocol duties at the Airport on several occasions for arrival and departure of foreign officials, Ambassadors and High Commissioners
12. Performed protocol duties for Enmore Martyrs Day, Street Fair, Remembrance Day and other official ceremonies and receptions
13. Receptions hosted by resident and non resident representatives on their respective national day
14. Requested courtesies in connection with the visits of the President and Prime Minister and other Ministers of the Government to foreign countries
15. Fulfilled requests from Guyana's Missions and Honorary Consulates for passport books, renewal forms, revenue stamps etc.

DOCUMENTS PROCESSED AND ISSUED

Diplomatic ID Cards issued	-	90
Diplomatic Passports Issued	-	35

Motor Vehicle Licences, Driver's, Televisions, Dip. Corps	-	55
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Processed 450 Customs Entry forms for duty-free concessions for diplomats.

Applications for Visas (approx) 90 by Government Officials traveling on official business.

Requests for visas on arrival to persons at the Cheddi Jagan International, Airport	-	130
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Requests for the issuance of visas and extensions of stay for Diplomats resident in Guyana	-	100
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Processed (approx) 30 of passports for Guyanese nationals resident in Antigua

VIP Identification cards issued	-	10
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Applications processed for Birth, Death & Marriage Certificates (approx)	-	400
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Applications for Police Clearance	-	150
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The Department continued to offer assistance on welfare matters in connection with the location of Guyanese nationals at home and abroad, Guyanese in distress and the death of Guyanese nationals abroad as well as providing general information.

BEIJING

EMBASSY OF GUYANA

1999 was an important milestone for the host nation, which celebrated the 50th Anniversary of its founding. It was an opportune time to call both national and international attention, to China's envied progress since 1949.

The Embassy was privileged to participate in some of the official activities held in honour of the occasion.

It was noted at one of the Anniversary functions that China during these past 50 years has been able to establish diplomatic relations with more than 160 countries. China also used the occasion to reaffirm its continued support for the developing countries.

It was quite evident throughout the year that even as China continued to make significant social and economic strides, it remained committed to maintaining and fostering even closer relations with developing countries like Guyana. Against this background, the Mission endeavored during the year to be fully briefed on China's developments, particularly those issues having relevance to our bilateral relations.

BILATERAL RELATIONS

The Embassy was actively involved during the year articulating Government of Guyana views while at the same time listening to the concerns of the Chinese authorities. The unresolved issue of the Bag Factory surfaced at the onset of the year and threatened to cast an unwelcome cloud over bilateral economic ties between the two countries. Both sides exercised much patience as possible solutions were explored. However, in spite of these efforts, a final solution was still pending at the close of the year.

Notwithstanding the Bag Factory issue, friendly and cordial relations were maintained throughout the year. These relations were given ample opportunity to build through the ex-

change of official visits and the close rapport the Mission continued to nurture with key Government Ministries.

TRADE AGREEMENT

In January the Charge d' Affaires held a meeting with MOFTEC officials to discuss ways of facilitating the import of Guyana's wood products into China. At this meeting the Chinese side presented a Draft Trade Agreement for Guyana to consider. This issue was discussed during the Joint Commission Session in Georgetown, but at the close of the year agreement had not been reached.

OFFICIAL VISITS

The Mission in 1999 received only one high ranking delegation from Guyana. The Hon. Henry Jeffrey, Minister of Health accompanied by three other Guyanese Doctors made a familiarization visit to China during the period August 12-22. The trip to China included visits to Shanghai and Jiangsu Province.

The Hon. Minister met with his Chinese counterpart for a working discussion. During this meeting both sides reflected positively on the development of bilateral relations and committed themselves to the further strengthening of these ties.

This visit also provided an opportunity for Guyana to express its gratitude to the Chinese for the assistance that their Medical Team is providing to the Health Sector in Guyana. Both sides also pledged to look for ways to expand the scope of their current cooperation.

GUYANESE INVESTIGATE CHINA TIMBER MARKETS

Through an initiative of the Embassy, two persons representing the Forest Producers Association of Guyana were able to attend the China Timber Wood Products Markets '99 Conference held in Shanghai in January.

COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION

In April the University of Guyana and the China Education Service Center concluded an agreement appointing the latter as an Overseas Agent.

MFA DESK OFFICER VISITS CHINA

FSO Torrington attended a Workshop in May for Diplomats from Latin America & the Caribbean sponsored by the Foreign Affairs College of China.

MISSION ACTIVITIES

Visits to other Cities & Provinces

The year under review did provide two opportunities for the Charge d' Affaires to travel to other parts of China. The first was in response to an invitation from the Mayor of Dalian City to participate in that city's annual Chinese New Year Spring Festival, which was held in February.

The second invitation came from the Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Yang Jiechi, to participate along with the other GRULAC Heads in a trip to Hebei and Shanxi Provinces during the month of May.

GUYANESE GET-TOGETHER'

In the month of May during FSO Torrington's visit, the Charge d'Affaires hosted a get-together of all the Guyanese in Beijing. Also present, was a student from the sister CARICOM State of Dominica. During the visit of the Hon. Minister of Health a similar activity was hosted at the Embassy.

GOVERNMENT OF CHINA – UNICEF BEIJING STRATEGY MEETING

The Charge d' Affaires participated in the above-mentioned Meeting that was held in August, as well as a follow-up meeting in September. The purpose of which was to arrive at an agreed China-UNICEF Programme of Co-operation for the period 2001-2005. (Guyana was invited to participate in these meeting because of its current status as a member of the UNICEF Governing Council).

GRULAC & COMMONWEALTH GROUP

The Embassy, through participation by its Charge d'Affaires, remained actively involved in 1999 in the monthly luncheon meetings and other activities of the afore-mentioned Groups.

ADMINISTRATION

STAFFING

The Local staff complement of three (namely; Interpreter, Driver and Cleaner) was maintained throughout the reporting year.

During the year the Home-based staff complement of two remained unchanged.

The First Secretary acting in the capacity of Charge d' Affaires headed the Embassy for the entire year. The other home based staff stationed at the Mission was the Confidential Secretary.

UTILIZATION OF LEAVE

All Local staff utilized all of their leave entitlement for the year.

Leave returns for Home-based Staff for 1999 was as follows:

Leave Utilized in 1999

C. Pollydore	Nil	Nil	Nil
J. Blakett	42	2	Nil

COMPUTERIZATION

The Mission's work efficiency was given a significant boost during the year with a capital allocation, which was used to purchase three computers and two printers. The computers are networked with the capacity for expansion should the need arise in the future. The computers and its peripherals have also enabled the Mission to access information from the internet which has now made it possible to keep abreast with developments taking place in Guyana.

MAINTENANCE OF BUILDING & EQUIPMENT

Since the completion of the refurbishing works done to the Embassy Building in 1998, the Residence has remained unoccupied. Equipment including the Official car were serviced on a regular basis in order to ensure their maximum output.

TUITION FEES

It was necessary during the year, to bring to the attention of the Ministry the situation which has now developed in Beijing where the current ceiling paid for tuition fees has become woefully inadequate and unrealistic.

At the close of the year the situation was still awaiting a favourable conclusion.

FINANCE

1999 was a very encouraging year for the Mission from the financial perspective. The commendable achievement in this regard, was that by the middle of December all rentals for the Embassy Building and Staff Apartments had already been paid in full. This was due to receipt of adequate monthly remittances from Headquarters to cover expenses.

Notwithstanding the fact that the Mission continued throughout the year without the services of a trained accountant, it still maintained simple but accurate records of all its financial transactions.

The Mission's accounting functions are performed by the Charge d'Affaires.

REVENUE

Total revenue collected by the Mission for the year amounted to US\$1,271.71. This entire sum represents payments received from the performance of consular functions. All revenue was remitted to the Accountant General as required, on a quarterly basis.

COMMUNICATION WITH HEADQUARTERS

The maintenance of timely communication with Headquarters during the year was given priority as evidenced by the seventeen Diplomatic Bags/Pouches dispatch by the Missions to the Ministry.

One shipment sent via DHL was received at the Ministry broached. Following this incident, measures have been put in place to avoid any reoccurrence.

STUDENT AFFAIRS

During the year the Mission maintained close contact and provided assistance to the

PSM students in China. PSM-approved monthly allowances were disbursed to the students accordingly.

In June, one of the students, FSO Ms. Bevon Mc Donald completed her studies and returned to Headquarters to resume duty. This departure resulted in only a lone student remaining in China at the close of 1999. Despite the efforts of the Mission, Guyana utilized none of the two scholarships offered by the Chinese Government in 1999.

While the Mission has no precise mandate to look into the affairs of other CARICOM students, it continued its traditional practice of keeping in contact with these students and providing them with non-financial assistance whenever this was possible.

CONSULAR ACTIVITIES

The Mission's consular functions during the year continued to be focused primarily on the tasks of processing Guyanese passports and issuing visas.

During the year the Mission issued the following visas:

Courtesy	3
Business	34
Tourist	4

The Mission issued three new passports and a similar number was renewed.

BRASILIA

EMBASSY OF GUYANA

1999 will stand out as significant and positive year in the history of Guyana's bilateral relations with Brazil.

However, if an analysis is made from the perspective that it is Guyana's intention to position itself in South America as a country that will be both literally and figuratively a bridge between the continent, the Caribbean, and the world beyond then the conclusion must be drawn that there is still a great deal to achieve as we move into the twenty first century. It is also critical that Guyana continues to bear in mind that our giant neighbour in the south has risen to a position of importance, if not dominance, in the Americas. Brazil is now the third largest economy after the United States and Mexico, we should also take into consideration that Brazil's global power is appreciating to a point where President Cardoso is now speaking of the possibility of Brazil being reclassified as a developed country.

There are exciting prospects for bilateral relations in almost every area. For example, the promotion of trade will be fostered as our understanding of, and association with Mercosul, deepen. The development of the Brazilian concept of the Northern Channel - 'Calha Norte' - will influence our own development, both through the road and bridge link, and through the potential for investment by companies from Brazil and third countries, in the Rupununi and other regions of Guyana. In the cultural arena, the enormous interest of the average Brazilians in learning English offers tremendous opportunities for Guyana becoming a centre for ESL training, and for collaborating with Brazil in distance education.

There are also sobering aspects to our future interaction. As physical and social communication increase between our two countries, the usual problems of close association will arise. Therefore Guyana must be prepared for intensified cooperation with Brazil in such areas as customs, immigration, crime and health.

The potential that Brazil represents is not being ignored by the other CARICOM countries with resident accreditation. Both Trinidad and Tobago and Suriname have made considerable investment in their Missions in Brasilia, and in their outreach to Brazil. It is true that

Guyana still has a natural advantage because of the critical role we can play in the development axis of northern Brazil. However, it is imperative that we seize the moment. And, to do this, a necessary first step is to increase the human and financial resources of the Guyana Embassy, Brazil.

Visits and Meetings

There were two high level visits during the year in review. During the period May 19 - 22, 1999, President Janet Jagan paid an Official State Visit during which she visited the capital, Brasilia, and the northern states of Roraima and Amazonas. And in the following month she led Guyana's delegation to the historic first Summit between the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean and the countries of the European Union which was held in Rio de Janeiro.

At a lower level, but of great importance to the programme of bilateral cooperation, August saw the realization of the long awaited visit to Guyana of the Brazilian Inter Disciplinary Evaluation Team with the objective of evaluating projects from Guyanese agencies that could benefit from Brazilian technical cooperation. In November, after months of preparation and correspondence, the Ministry of External Relations of Brazil gave the assurance that the first Institutional Meeting between Guyana and Brazil to discuss the interconnection of the highway systems of both countries would definitely be convened in Boa Vista in the first quarter of the year 2000. In the area of military collaboration, the high command of the Guyana Defence Force visited Brazil on two occasions to attend first a Regional Intelligence Meeting, and subsequently a bilateral exchange on the same topic.

Agreements

1999 was a year when a number of Agreements were concluded with the potential to facilitate more effective interchange between Guyana and Brazil, particularly in view of the eventual road and bridge link. Both the Memorandum of Understanding with Mercosul concluded during the LAC/EU Summit, and the Memorandum of Understanding between the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and the Class Association of Amazonas signed during

President Jagan's visit to Manaus, are important to the development of trade. The Agreement to abolish the need for visas for the holders of diplomatic, official and special passports in both countries is also a significant first step in promoting easy movement over our common border. Foreign Minister Rohee and H.E. Ambassador Luiz Felipe Lampera, Minister of External Relations of Brazil also signed the Guyana/Brazil Agreement on the Performance of Remunerated Activities by Dependents of Diplomats Consular, Administrative and technical staff. The two Agreements have been ratified by the Government of Guyana. The process of ratification is continuing in Brazil at the end of which the Agreements will enter into force.

Embassy Work Programme

Bilateral relations with Brazil

The focus for the first half of the year in review was on the successful implementation of the two high level visits which followed in quick succession. The third quarter showed a shift in emphasis to the implementation of the priorities outlined in the Joint Comminque' that emanated from the Official State Visit in May. In the final quarter of 1999 there was need to include the activities consonant with the arrival of a new Head of Mission in September.

The final review indicates that the majority of the bilateral issues in the Work Programme - approximately two thirds - were initiated but, being incomplete, were brought forward to the year 2000.

These matters are listed below:-

- Convening of the Guyana Brazil Group on Consular Cooperation
- Convening of the next Session of the Guyana/Brazil Joint Commission
- Convening of the Second Meeting of the Joint Border Commission on Border Markers.

Bilateral relations with other countries

In 1999, the countries of concurrent accreditation remained areas of unrealized opportunity for Guyana. Agreement for the new Head of Mission was received from each of the four:- Argentina, Bolivia, Peru and Uruguay:- the priorities in the year 2000 will be the presentation of credentials and the compilation of a Work Programme for each country.

Denmark, Egypt, Italy and Malaysia are accredited to Guyana from Brazil. Malaysia is by far the most active of these countries in its relations with Guyana. The initiatives with Italy and Egypt which had sprung from visits paid by the late President Cheddi Jagan have been slow to bear fruit, and may need to be recharged. In the case of Denmark, there are possibilities for action in the areas of human rights and private investment that would have to be explored.

It should be noted that a number of countries, mostly from Africa and the former Eastern Europe, cover Guyana in an informal way. They have been added to the Embassy's mailing list.

Consular Matters

In the final quarter of 1999, the Embassy liaised with the Ministry of External Relations of Brazil with regard to the selection of an Honorary Consul for Guyana in the State of Roraima. This is a matter of the most urgent priority which will be actively pursued in the year 2000.

Guyanese who found themselves stranded in Brasilia, and the issue of absconding Guyanese students are matters that caused difficulties in 1999, and will need to be addressed as priorities in 2000.

In the former category, the number of Guyanese who will be tempted to seek fortunes in Brazil, and in countries beyond, will inevitably increase as the road link becomes a reality. A mechanism for dealing with those who are destitute and request financial assistance in order to return home needs to be put in place before a crisis occurs. The Embassy will submit proposals for consideration by Headquarters.

Attempts were made to deal with the question of absconding students in 1999. However, these resulted in a stalemate with the Brazilian authorities. Vigorous efforts to resolve the issue will be made in the year 2000, since this problem has temporarily blocked the flow of sponsored Guyanese students to Brazil.

General matters

There was a high rate of completion of the routine activities of the Embassy in the areas of Reporting, Consular Matters, Information Dissemination, and Administration and Finance, although a formal report has not been received at the time of writing, the Embassy has already undertaken corrective measures in those areas of slippage identified by the Deputy Auditor General in the special audit which he conducted in December, 1999.

Embassy Staff

Both the Head of Mission and First Secretary were changed in 1999. Since they represented the full complement of diplomatic staff at the Embassy, it was natural that these changes caused some degree of disruption, not least because of the need to master the Portuguese language in the case of the new arrivals. The introduction of monthly staff meetings helped to regularize the situation by the end of the year.

Outstanding issues concerning both locally recruited and home based staff were not resolved in 1999. In the case of the former the major problems related to emoluments and conditions of service. With regard to the latter, the reoccupations are the longstanding requests for Guyana to pay: (1) the actual cost of tuition for school children and (2) the cost of Portuguese lessons for the Accountant and the Confidential Secretary. These matters need to be finalised in the year 2000.

Operational Costs

The collapse of the Brazilian Real at the beginning of 1999 proved to be a relief for the

Embassy from the severe difficulties and financial constraints under which it had been operating in previous years. Nonetheless, the Embassy is functioning far below optimum because of the lack of human resources and equipment, and because of the inadequacy of Embassy premises. Furthermore, the analysis of Brazil's economic situation is that the Real has stabilized but that inflation is on the rise, particularly with regard to consumer goods and housing. Hence any financial relief to the Embassy is likely to be short lived. In this situation it is sensible and desirable that the Embassy's capital requirements, which represent both an accumulated need and new realities, be met as quickly as practicable to allow us to take advantage of the present window of opportunity to make necessary purchases before prices sky rocket again. Employment costs do not represent the true needs of the Embassy, but are not expected to increase significantly in the year 2000. Adequate remittances for running expenses, including essential travel to other States in Brazil, are critical to the successful operation of the Embassy, given its lack of human resources.

Conclusion

The Embassy performed creditably during 1999 despite many constraints.

A more wide ranging and ambitious Work Programme has been prepared for the year 2000, in accordance with the increasing strategic importance of Brazil to Guyana.

Military Cooperation

The Embassy facilitated the collaboration between the Guyanese and Brazilian Military. Lt. Trevor Bowman attended a jump Masters Course in Brazil during the period April 19-June 5, 1999. The Guyana Defence Force attended the V Regional Meeting of Military Exchange and Intelligence, Brazil/Guyana during the period July 14-16, 1999. Major General Joseph Singh and delegation attended the Third Military Intelligence Conference between Guyana and Brazil during the period October 4-7, 1999.

Treaty of Amazonian Cooperation

The Embassy reported on a meeting on the Amazon region which was held in Rio de Janeiro. At that meeting it was announced by an Official of Itamaraty that the Protocol transforming the Treaty of Amazonian Cooperation into the Organisation of the Treaty of Amazonian Cooperation is scheduled to be completed during the second half of 2000.

When the Headquarters is established in Brasilia the Embassy will be monitoring the activities.

Arrival of Ambassador Miles

Former Head of Mission Ambassador Evelyn departed Brasilia on completion of his tour of duty in May 1999.

Following her arrival and Accreditation on September 28, 1999, Ambassador Miles inter alia, embarked on a number of introductory Courtesy calls.

The Embassy is awaiting advice on the proposal for Guyana to invite the Federal Minister of Agrarian Reform to Guyana and also a team of Officials from the Ministry of Agriculture will be invited to visit Brazil.

There is also a proposal for a private sector team to visit Brazil following the Courtesy Call between Ambassador Miles and the Director of the Department of Trade Promotion of the Ministry of External Relations of Brazil.

Concurrent Accreditations of the Guyana Ambassador

The Guyana Ambassador in Brazil is concurrently accredited to Argentina, Bolivia, Peru and Uruguay.

During the year under review the Embassy provided information and responded to

requests for clarification on matters from a number of the Embassies to which the Guyana Ambassador is concurrently accredited.

The Embassy makes available to the Embassies of concurrent accreditation copies of the Takuba News and the Guyana Information Services Weekly News Bulletin.

Embassies Accredited to Guyana

Guyana/Malaysia Relations

The Mission transmitted to Headquarters the Brochure of the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP). This offered training opportunities to prospective Guyanese in a number of areas. In relation to technical assistance to the Guyana Foreign Service Institute, the Embassy maintained liaison with the Embassy of Malaysia with regard to a visit to the Malaysian Institute for Diplomacy and International Relations by two Guyanese Officials of the Guyana Foreign Service Institute. It will be recalled that Dr. Mark Kirton of the University of Guyana and Mr. Imtyaz Mohammed, Programme Manager of the Guyana Foreign Service Institute visited Malaysia in August 1999.

The Embassy was represented at a Seminar on Palm Oil, Application and Nutrition which was hosted by the Embassy of Malaysia in Brasilia in July 1999. Documentation was forwarded to Head Office.

Request for Technical Assistance

The Government of Guyana is requesting technical assistance from the Government of Malaysia in the area of the cultivation of the fruit Rambutan. The Embassy will be liaising with the Embassy of Malaysia in this regard.

Courtesy Call

Ambassador Miles paid a Courtesy Call on the Ambassador of Malaysia

Guyana/Egypt Relations

There was collaboration with the Egyptian Embassy and Headquarters with respect to the finalization of arrangements for the accreditation of Ambassador Ramzy Ezzeldin Ramzy to Guyana in May 1999.

Negotiations between the Government of Guyana and the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt continue in relation to a draft Agreement on Economic, Technical, Educational and Cultural Cooperation and a Joint Commission of Cooperation between Guyana and Egypt. Guyana's response to the re-draft submitted by Egypt is currently being considered by the Government of Egypt.

Ambassador Miles has paid a Courtesy Call on the Ambassador of Egypt.

Guyana/Denmark Relations

There was collaboration between the Danish Embassy and Head Office with regard to the concluding of arrangements for the accreditation of Ambassador Anita Hugau to Guyana in June 1999.

Ambassador Miles paid a Courtesy Call on the Ambassador of Denmark.

Guyana/Italy Relations

There is continuing collaboration between the Italian Embassy and Head Office in relation to the procurement, by Guyana, of an Italian Soft Loan. The Embassy has forwarded documentation received from Headquarters to the Italian Embassy for its consideration and response.

The Embassy has written the Italian Embassy requesting a status report on the Agreement on the Promotion and Protection of Investment between Guyana and Italy and the Agreement of Friendship and Cooperation between Guyana and Italy. A response is being awaited.

Ambassador Miles paid Courtesy Call on the Ambassador of Italy.

Relations with CARICOM States Accredited to Brazil

The Embassy was represented at a Luncheon which was hosted by the Ambassador of Trinidad and Tobago, HE Robert M. Torry to discuss improved relations between Caribbean countries, the Federal University and the Secretariat for Science and Technology, both in the State of Goias.

The Embassy received HE Sonja Welch, the newly accredited Ambassador of Barbados to Brazil for a Courtesy Meeting when she presented her Credentials to the President of Brazil. Ambassador Welch is resident in Caracas.

Ambassador Miles paid Courtesy Calls on the Ambassador of Trinidad & Tobago, the Ambassador of Suriname and the Charge'd' Affaires a.i. of Haiti.

Requests for Government of Guyana Support - Candidatures

During the year under review, the Embassy served as intermediary in the transmission of requests for support of candidatures from a number of countries.

Dissemination of Information

The Embassy continues to forward on a regular basis to the Ministry of External Relations of the Federative Republic of Brazil and to relevant Embassies the Guyana Information Services Weekly Bulletin and the Takuba News, the publication of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Embassy is preparing a Data Base to target States in Brazil and Organisations.

Extension of Courtesies to the Guyana Delegation attending the II Americas Model United Nations

Staff of the Embassy met and extended courtesies to Dr. Mark Kirton and the Guyana Delegation attending the II Americas Model United Nations in Brasilia during the period June 26-July 1, 1999.

The Embassy was represented at the opening Ceremony of the II Americas Model United Nations and hosted the Guyana Delegation at the Embassy before departure from Brasilia.

Economic Diplomacy

The Embassy is collaborating with the Embassy of Ukraine in relation to the interest of that Government in developing closer economic/trade relations with Guyana.

The Embassy provided information to the Japanese firm Sasaki & CIA Limited on its enquiry about quarries in Guyana. The Embassy is in the process of following up with Officials of the company.

The Embassy is preparing a data base on companies and agencies to which investment and trade information will be transmitted.

Attendance at Meetings

Ambassador Miles represented the Government of Guyana at the following Meetings:

- the 10th Meeting of the Board of Governors of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture (IICA), Salvador Bahia October 26-29, 1999
- Inter-American Development Bank Board Meeting in Rio de Janeiro, December 2-4, 1999

Relations with Guyanese

Mr. Paulo do Vale Pereira Filho has written the Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressing a desire to serve as Honorary Consul for Guyana in Boa Vista, State of Roraima. Following a directive from Head Office the Embassy informally requested advice from Itamaraty. An informal response was received and the details will shortly be submitted to Headquarters.

Public Service Management Students in 1999

During the year under review three Guyanese students completed their training in Brazil. Mr. Lee Van de Santos completed training in Pharmacy at the Federal University in Rio Grande do Sul, Ms Elisabeth Sukhram in Statistics at the Federal University in Amazonas and Mr. Pierce Paul at the Federal University in Minas Gerais. Mr Lee Van de Santos has since returned home to fulfil his contractual obligation to the Government of Guyana.

There is one Guyanese student currently in training Ms Bernadette Headly at the Federal University in Minas Gerais, course of study Nutrition.

The problem of Foreign Students not returning to their respective countries on completion of their training in Brazil is also engaging the attention of the Ministry of Education of Brazil and Itamaraty Officials. These two agencies are in the process of engaging in discussions with the countries concerned in an effort to modify the terms of the Agreement to ensure that students return to their respective countries.

Ambassador Miles, since her arrival and assumption of duty, has made a request for a Courtesy Call on the Head of Department at Itamaraty to discuss, inter alia, this matter. A response is being awaited from the Ministry of External Relations. Ambassador Miles raised this matter during her Courtesy Call with the Federal Minister of Education Paulo Renato Souza.

This is impeding Guyana's use of Brazilian scholarship offers. As such, its early resolution is a high priority for this Mission.

Meetings with Staff Members

Ambassador Miles began convening monthly meetings with members of staff from November '99. To date, two meetings have been held.

Embassy Filing Project

The Embassy has embarked on a project to make the filing system at the Embassy more efficient. In the first phase of the project closed files of the Mission and the former Consulate in Sao Paulo were indexed and stored. This phased is nearing completion.

A special audit of the accounts and books of the Mission was conducted during the period December 10-20, 1999, by Mr. Lennie Razac, Deputy Auditor General.

Staff Changes

Staff changes at the Mission during 1999 were as follows:

- January - Ms. Gillian Rowe, First Secretary, arrived and assumed duty
- January - Mrs. Audrey Jardine-Waddell, First Secretary, and family departed on completion of her tour of duty.
- May - Ambassador Mr. Ivan Evelyn Jr. and family departed on completion of his tour of duty.
- September - Ambassador Mrs Marilyn Cheryl Miles and family arrived for the commencement of her tour of duty.

Consular Activities

The Mission continued to provide regular consular services to both Guyanese and non-Guyanese in Brazil, as well as in some neighbouring countries such as Peru, Argentina, Paraguay and Chile, during the year under review.

Requests from the latter countries were for visas as well as renewals and issuance of new passports, since Guyana does not have consular representation in these countries.

Passports

Twenty - two passports were issued and eight renewed for the year under review. Compared with 1998, there has been a significant reduction in revenue collected from these services.

Consular Inscription

A total of four Inscriptions were issued to Guyanese nationals. This document is used to certify the individual's identity.

In addition to the abovementioned service the Mission also rendered the service of authentication of documents. A total of two were authenticated during the year.

Revenue Collected

Revenue collected by the Mission for 1999 reflected a significant reduction in relation to that of 1998. There were two major reasons for this:

- There were fewer requests for renewals and issuance of Passports as well as the demands for other consular services.
- The depreciation of the Reais to the US Dollar. This resulted in a significant reduction in the US dollar equivalent.

As a consequence the Mission after reviewing the situation has decided to use a US dollar base for the collection of fees for services rendered. This system would take effect from January 1, 2000.

Monthly Statements/Reports

This Mission has responsibility to forward on a monthly basis in relation to finances the following:

- Monthly Financial Statements
- Revenue Returns
- Visa Returns
- Payment Vouchers/Cash Book Statements

The monthly Financial Statements were sent by Fax to the Ministry. This Statement reflects the actual and projected expenditure for the month.

The other statements that are listed above were sent by the diplomatic bag. However, there was one major set that caused a delay in the monthly despatch of the bag and that is the irregularity of flights by Suriname Airways.

Another set back in the monthly despatch of vouchers was the fact that due to the inadequacy of staff being away on leave, the Accounts Clerk had to be fitting in for the Confidential Secretary while she was away on leave, thus having to stop the preparation of these vouchers. To this end, in the year under review there were still vouchers to be sent to Head Office for the months of September to December.

All outstanding returns are expected to be completed and despatched to Head Office during the month of January 2000.

Education Allowance

The issue regarding the inadequacy of the existing ceiling for tuition feed paid for children of representational staff and for a revision to be made was not finalized. In addition to previous years communication, several approaches were made during the year under review to which no response has yet been received.

The Mission is anticipating a relief in the new year, since payment of tuition fees continues to be a major preoccupation of the affected staff.

Finance and Accounting

The Mission during the year under review received allocation which was comparatively the same to that which was budgeted for under the various sub-heads. However, there were a few sub-heads that were either inadequately funded or not funded. Those respective heads that fell short of the budgeted amounts were brought to the Ministry's attention in October '99. They are as follows:

100-104	Clerical and Office Support
100-105	Semi Skilled and Unskilled Operatives (no funds allocated)
200-201	Other Direct Labour Cost
200-203	Benefits and Allowances

The Mission, even though it was faced with increased costs for goods and services during the year, was able to regulate its spending under various sub-heads. It should be noted that the Mission was without an Ambassador for some months, as such there were less expenses incurred under certain heads. This situation is expected to change in the new year with the Head of Mission in place.

Monthly remittances continued throughout the year to be remitted late to the Embassy's account. As a consequence, there were delays in payment for certain goods and services. It should also be highlighted that the allocation for the same was also late.

Stranded Guyanese

During the year under review nine Guyanese visited the Embassy and reported that they were stranded. They all requested financial assistance (some requests were for air tickets to return to Guyana) from the Embassy. These Guyanese citizens were advised that the Embassy could not provide them with return airfares to Guyana. However, the following assistance was provided: the Embassy could issue them with a declaration advising that they are Guyanese nationals and that they had misplaced their identification; waiver the cost of the Emergency Travel Document for their return home; request assistance from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in locating their relatives who could assist them with air tickets home. None of the nationals were interested in this option. They stated that their relatives are not in a posi-

tion to send airfares for their return to Guyana.

The Embassy is preparing recommendations on this issue to be sent to Head Office. It is expected that with the road link between Guyana and Brazil in place, the number of such people will increase.

The Embassy is working on the compilation of a data base of Guyanese nationals in Brazil.

Consular Activities for 1999

Passports issued	22
Passports Renewed	8
Visas Issued:	
Business	34
Tourist	62
Courtesy	43
Diplomatic	14
Emergency Certificates	7
Authentication of Documents	2
Consular Inscricio	
Identification of Guyanese	4

BRUSSELS

EMBASSY OF GUYANA

Throughout the year 1999, the Embassy was fully immersed in ACP-EU negotiations for a successor agreement to the Lomé Convention, which commenced officially in late 1998. The year was marked by an intensive schedule of preparatory and negotiation meetings of the four negotiating groups as well as various groups and sub-committees.

The major meetings included the ACP/ACP-EU Council of Ministers meetings and Ministerial Negotiations in February in Dakar, Senegal and in July and December in Brussels. Other important meetings included the Meeting of Ministers of Mines in July, Ministers of Trade in October and the 5th Meeting of National and Regional Authorising Officers in September. There was also the 2nd ACP Summit in Santo Domingo in November.

The mission also participated in the meetings of the CARIFORUM group and continued to represent CARICOM in meetings of the LAC-EU and the Brussels Rio Group.

There were visits by Minister Clement Rohee and officials representing the rice and rum industries in Guyana.

The complement of staff was augmented by the arrival of two officers, Counsellor Gale Lee in January and First Secretary Monique Chuck-A-Sang in February.

ACP-EU Co-operation

The mission was actively involved in meetings at the ACP, CARIFORUM, Working Group and sub-committee levels, leading up to the joint ACP-EU negotiating sessions.

Special attention was accorded to issues of major interest to Guyana including good governance, trade liberalisation, REPA's, sugar, rice and rum. Guyana was a member of the Working Group on Good Governance.

Ministerial Meetings

At the ACP-EU Ministerial Negotiations in Dakar, Guyana was represented by Ambassador Brewster.

Minister Rohee visited Brussels on July 25-30 to participate in the 69th Session of the ACP Council of Ministers, the 24th Session of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers, the 2nd ACP-EU Ministerial Negotiating Conference and the Consultative Meeting of ACP Ministers of Mines.

The Minister was head of Guyana's delegation which was comprised of Ambassador Havelock Brewster, Counsellor Gale Lee, First Secretary Monique Chuck-A-Sang of the Guyana Embassy, Brussels as well as Mr. Yesu Persaud who represented the rice and rum industries.

The Minister made statements at the Ministers of Mines Meeting and in the Ministerial Committees on Commodities and Development Finance Cooperation. Minister Rohee spoke on rice and rum in the Commodities meeting and called for continued preferential market access and special assistance for the industries to develop and become more globally competitive. The Guyana delegation also participated in the CARIFORUM preparatory consultations prior to the Council sessions.

At the Council of Ministers and Ministerial Negotiations on 6-8 December, Guyana was represented by Ambassador Havelock Brewster, Counsellor Gale Lee, First Secretary Monique Chuck-A-Sang. Dr. Peter De Groot of the Rice Millers and Exporters Association also attended and participated in discussions pertaining to rice.

Meeting of Ministers of Trade

The Meeting of ACP Ministers of Trade was held on 21-20 October and was preceded by the Meeting of ACP Senior Trade Officials on 18-20 October. No representatives were sent from Guyana. The Embassy was represented by Ambassador Brewster and Counsellor Gale Lee.

The Ministers examined the Draft Declaration on the 3rd WTO Ministerial Conference prepared by the Senior Officials which was adopted thereafter. The main issue discussed under the Future of ACP-EU Relations was the extension of the current waiver for the ACP-EU trade preferences. In the Declaration, the ACP called on the EU to begin the process of applying for the extension of the waiver in the WTO.

It was firmly agreed at the meeting that the issue of development should be an integral part of the Seattle WTO Agenda and that priority should be accorded to implementation issues particularly relating to imbalances in many areas including agriculture.

ACP-EU Development Finance Cooperation Ministerial Committee

The meeting of the ACP-EU Development Finance Cooperation Ministerial Committee was held in Accra, Ghana on 11-13 November, 1999. Guyana was represented by Dr. Gobin Ganga of the Bank of Guyana and First Secretary M. Chuck-A-Sang.

2nd ACP Summit

Guyana was represented by Minister Clement Rohee and Ambassador Havelock Brewster at the Summit which took place in Santo Domingo on 25-26 November. This meeting was preceded by a Committee of Ambassadors meeting as well as an ACP Council of Ministers Session.

5th Meeting of National and Regional Authorising Officers

The 5th Meeting of National and Regional Authorising Officers was held in Brussels on September 20-22. No representative was sent from Guyana, however the Embassy participated in the meetings. These meetings assessed the progress achieved in negotiations on a successor agreement to Lome' and discussed strategies and the ACP position on issues concerning investment, private sector and other development strategies, sectoral policies, instruments and management systems and regional cooperation.

Candidatures

Carl Greenidge, current ACP Deputy Secretary General was nominated by Guyana for re-election to that post and was endorsed as the Caribbean candidate.

Following discussions at the ACP Council in Santo Domingo, it was agreed that since that position would be eliminated as a consequence of the proposed restructuring, the Caribbean should instead submit the candidature for the Director of the CTA.

CARIFORUM

Chairmanship of the CARIFORUM Group of Ambassadors in Brussels was handed over from the Dominican Republic to the Eastern Caribbean States in February. In September, Grenada should have assumed the position but could not since there was no Grenadian Ambassador. Guyana, then Haiti were asked to take up the position but could not due to budgetary and logistical constraints. Jamaica therefore assumed the position and Guyana is expected to fulfil this responsibility when its turn officially comes up in February 2000.

Centre for the Development of Industry

The Counsellor had a meeting in June at the CDI with the new country coordinator for Guyana Mr. Peter Alling. Discussions focused on the current CDI projects in Guyana and the potential for initiating more projects in different sectors. Mr. Alling subsequently visited Guyana in July to meet with the Private Sector Commission and various companies with whom they had ongoing projects and also potential companies for possible initiating projects. He had hoped to attend the GUYEXPO 99' however, it was cancelled.

International Diplomatic Fair - Bonn

On 12 June, the staff of the Embassy travelled to Bonn to participate in the annual International Diplomatic Fair organised by the German Foreign Ministry. The Guyana booth

was greatly enhanced by an attractive photographic display, posters and brochures as well as Guyanese handicraft, food, drinks and liquor. The food and drinks were prepared by the staff of the Embassy. The typical Guyanese snacks included channa, cassava pone, mettai, pholourie as well as ginger beer, lemonade and sorrel.

The booth attracted a great deal of attention and interest in Guyana. The people were fascinated by the natural beauty and wildlife of Guyana and many posters and brochures were distributed. The posters depicting the wildlife of Guyana were particularly in demand. This was the fourth time that the mission participated in the event.

General

In January, the Counsellor and First Secretary met with the outgoing and incoming European Commission Desk Officers to be briefed on the status of Guyana/EU Cooperation. Printed material on the European Union and ACP/EU Cooperation was sent to the Foreign Service Institute.

The mission responded to numerous requests for information on tourism and doing business in Guyana.

In March, Ambassador Brewster participated in meetings of the Caribbean Development Bank in Barbados as Guyana's Executive Director.

The mission pursued with the EC Energy Directorate a request from the Minister for assistance in a number of small scale renewable energy projects. The EC subsequently responded in July to advise that they were willing to finance a consultant but could not finance any projects.

On 17-18 May, Ambassador Brewster represented Guyana at the 20th Meeting of the Committee of the Board of Governors of Inter-American Corporation of the IDB in Paris.

The Ambassador represented the Honourable Minister at a NAM/G77-C and G8 Meeting of Foreign Ministers in Cologne on June 10. Discussions focussed on major global

issues including economic and political issues such as debt, security and conflict resolution. A proposal by South African President Mandela for the establishment of a Joint Consultative Mechanism on global issues was also discussed.

Consular Activities

During the year, the mission collected revenue amounting to 75,623 Belgian Francs. The equivalent of Guy\$359,807 was paid to the Accountant General.

Consular services rendered were as follows:

Non-impediment certificate	1
Renunciation of Citizenship	6
Certification of Documents	29
Visas	8
New Passports	10
Renewals of Passports	23
Endorsement of marriage title in Passport	1

The mission also sold one tender document for the Water Supply Rehabilitation Project on behalf of GUYWA.

CARACAS

EMBASSY OF GUYANA

INTRODUCTION

Beginning with the election of President Hugo Chávez Frias, events in Venezuela unfolded at a rapid pace and at many levels of the political landscape, the economy and the society, all requiring careful analysis and attention by the Embassy.

The Embassy crafted its day to day activities to ensure that all aspects of its reporting and analysis were done in a timely fashion so as to keep pace with these developments. Additionally, other aspects of its multifaceted functions at the economic, trade, consular and community levels were given the full attention required.

This report seeks to highlight some of the main aspects of the Embassy's work in 1999.

GUYANA - VENEZUELA BILATERAL RELATIONS

Nineteen ninety-nine marked the emergence of President Hugo Chávez Frias. Bringing an astute reading of the mood of his people to the presidential office following his victory at the polls in December, 1998, he mixed populism and purposefulness to lead an epic iconoclastic backlash against Venezuela's political pillars. By the end of the year he had wiped out Congress, initiated far-reaching judicial reform, promulgated his vaunted new constitution and left the old political elite without a constituency. Criticised for not doing enough on the economic front he also presided over a deteriorating economy further battered by the calamitous flooding of Vargas state in December. Nineteen ninety-nine also saw the 100th anniversary of the Paris Award which set the present boundary between Guyana and Venezuela.

President Janet Jagan's visit to Venezuela for Chávez' inauguration in February and Foreign Minister José Vicente Rangel's visit to Guyana at the end of March marked the two

most important occurrences in diplomatic relations between the two countries during the period under review.

Presidents Jagan and Chavez agreed to increase bilateral cooperation. Their deliberations paved the way for the visit of Minister Rangel during which a High Level Bilateral Commission (HLBC) and a Joint Business Council were established between the two states. The territorial controversy did not arise during their deliberations.

Foreign Minister Clement Rohee held bilateral meetings with his Venezuelan counterpart during the latter's visit to Guyana as well as in Rio de Janeiro, Guatemala and New York during the latter half of the year.

In December there were three meetings of the HLBC in the areas of Marine Resources, Health and Anti-drug cooperation, all of which took place in Georgetown. The Joint Business Council is expected to be activated during 2000. Further meetings of the HLBC are expected to take place culminating with a visit of President Chávez to Guyana sometime this year.

The one hundredth anniversary of the Paris Award coincided with Venezuela's displeasure concerning Guyana's grant of oil concessions allegedly in their territorial waters and their Foreign Minister's statement of Venezuela's intention to stage an act of reaffirmation of sovereignty. Venezuela's subsequent increase in troop strength at border outposts, discharge of small arms fire on Ankoko and incursions in our airspace served to increase tensions in the bilateral relationship which had been already exacerbated by media coverage surrounding the 100th anniversary itself.

All of this took place against the backdrop of a heightened sense of nationalism in Venezuela, engendered particularly by the deliberations of the Constituent Assembly, which caused the insertion of a clause in the new Constitution negating territorial treaties not validly entered into and by media coverage in both Guyana and Venezuela concerning the Beale Aerospace project.

However, at the same time, President Chávez publicly ruled out the use of force as a means of settling the territorial controversy and Foreign Minister Rangel gave private assur-

ances that Venezuela had no hostile intentions toward Guyana. By December the climate had improved sufficiently enough for meetings of the three sub commissions of the HLBC to take place successfully.

The flood disaster in December forced Venezuela's focus inward. The government and people of Guyana magnanimously contributed relief supplies in their neighbour's hour of need which served to further relax the strains that attended the 100th anniversary award.

Concurrent Accreditations

For reasons unknown, the scheduled meeting of the Guyana-Colombia Joint Commission did not materialise in late 1999.

The Head of Mission presented letters of credence to the president of Ecuador on February 11th. Ecuador was preoccupied with its volatile politics/economic situation and is yet to make good on its undertaking to respond to the draft bilateral cooperation Agreement which the Mission submitted for the consideration of the Ecuadorean Foreign Ministry during the middle of the year.

Bilateral Relations with Countries that Conducted Relations with Guyana through their Missions in Caracas

Relations with Japan

Guyana/Japan relations were further advanced by the end of 1999.

Grant Aid

During the course of the year there was uncertainty regarding the lack of implementation of the projects which had qualified for Japanese Grant Aid in 1995. Also, there was little movement in Fisheries Grant Aid, as well as in Cultural Grant Aid.

In July the Japanese Embassy in Caracas advised that General Grant Aid, was suspended due to the on-going process of privatization of the Guyanese electricity sector and that Fisheries Grant Aid was also suspended due to matters related to the disposal of six stern trawlers.

Guyana responded in detail to Japan on the matter of the disposal of the trawlers and later, in August, resubmitted an Application for Japanese Grant Aid for the Mahaica Artisanal Fish Complex Construction Project. Consideration was requested of the Japanese for implementation in the 1999 - 2000 Japanese Fiscal Year.

The visit to Guyana at year end by Mr. Taka Hiko Horimura, Director General for the Latin America and Caribbean Bureau in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Japan, provided a good opportunity to examine and clarify a number of issues in Guyana/Japan bilateral cooperation. The opportunity was taken to explain the privatization process of the Guyana Electricity Cooperation, which had benefited from Japanese aid in the past, and the future status of Japanese Grant Aid in the energy sector in Guyana. With the assurances given of Guyana's intention to honour the letter and spirit of the terms and conditions of Japanese Aid it is anticipated that Grant Aid will resume in 2000.

The Embassy of Guyana in Caracas was also able to advance requests for Cultural Grant Aid and has received positive feed back that there will be assistance forthcoming in the areas of the Cultural Centre, Language Lab Equipment and Broadcasting, once the revised application forms have been re-submitted by the May 2000 deadline.

In all of the above spheres the Embassy pursued transmission of documents with promptness and maintained a close working relationship with the Embassy of Japan with a view to advancing Guyana/Japan Cooperation.

Training

During the year there was a high rate of acceptance by Guyana of Japanese training offered. This augured well for the improvement of the skills base in Guyana in such areas as:

- The Promotion of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises.
- Vegetable Seed Production.
- Urban Water Supply Systems.
- Television Production.
- Sustainable Tourism Development.
- Leaders of Persons with Disabilities.
- Sewerage Works Engineering.
- Fishing Resource Management.

The Embassy would also recommend Language training in Japanese as another area for consideration. The Japanese Embassy in Caracas provided several booklets and cassettes for study of the Japanese language at the beginner level. Advance courses could also be requested.

Relations with other Countries

The status of relations with other countries is listed hereunder:

Switzerland

In January 1999 Cabinet approved the waiver of visa requirements for Swiss nationals wishing to travel to Guyana.

The visit to Guyana of the Swiss Chargé d’Affaires based in Caracas to attend the important workshop on “Capacity Building Programme for Heavily Indebted Poor Countries: Debt Analysis and Strategy”, also provided an opportunity for an exchange of information on Guyana/Swiss relations. Also notable in this period was the Swiss offer of assistance to Guyana in the Constitutional Reform process. Switzerland has also promised to speed up consideration of an Investment Protection Agreement to help promote bilateral trade and investment relations.

The Islamic Republic of Iran

The renewed interest of Iran in purchasing Rice from Guyana was conveyed by the Embassy to the Guyana Rice Development Board.

As Chairman of the 8th Islamic Conference Summit, Iran also transmitted through its Embassy in Caracas a proposal for creating an investment venture among OIC Member Countries. This was also forwarded. Messages of concern to high officials in Guyana on matters such as the displacement of Moslems in Chechnya were also transmitted.

In the economic sphere it is recommended that Guyana seek to expand economic and trade relations with Iran.

Austria

During 1999 Austria offered Guyana Scholarships in Hotel Management and Tourism Management to begin from October 2000 to May 2001. The deadline for applications is May 15, 2000 and a limited number of Scholarships are available.

Outgoing Austrian Ambassador Mr. Johannes Skriwan paid his farewell calls to Guyana in February 1999. Agrément has been granted for the accreditation of the new Ambassador - Dr. Erika Liebenwein.

Guyana supplied Austria with information on Mining in Guyana.

Finland

Relations between Guyana and Finland, conducted through the Caracas post, were largely protocolar. On account of financial constraints, Guyana was unable to attend the meeting in Finland which was to discuss the follow up of cultural initiatives which were decided upon at the Summit of Heads of State of Latin America and the Caribbean and the European Union in Rio de Janeiro in June 1999.

Norway

There is scope for increased activity in these relations during 2000 to improve on 1999's performance.

With the accreditation of a new Ambassador of Poland to Guyana, H.E. Mr. Jacek Perlin, there are indications that there will be further development of bilateral relations. The Polish invitation to Guyana's Minister of Foreign Affairs to attend an International Conference on "The Community of Democracies" in June 2000 has been forwarded.

Israel

Israel offered Guyana a number of partial scholarships, which were taken up, in such areas as Poultry Management and Dairy Cattle Production. It is recommended however that greater consideration be given to taking up more offers from Israel since these are usually highly specialized courses.

Spain

Arising out of the Spain-Caricom Summit held in Trinidad and Tobago in July 1999 a greater commitment to promote economic scientific and technical relations between Spain and Caricom was affirmed by both Parties.

Guyana requested a draft agreement on technical cooperation from Spain as it desired to enter into its own cooperation programme as was intended with Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago.

In the field of training, Spain offered research Scholarships for the year 2000 and also training at the Spanish Diplomatic School for the year 1999/2000. The latter was not taken up.

In the area of other contacts between Spain and Guyana, there were enquiries from a

company interested in bidding for an IDB road project and there was also the interest of a Spanish TV Station in transmitting programmes about Spain and the Spanish culture to Guyana. In both cases responses were forwarded by the Embassy. There is need however to encourage greater bilateral contact in such areas as language training, tourism and also in the economic realm.

Greece

There was not much contacts through the Caracas Embassy during 1999. These relations continued to be largely protocolar viz, the transmission of messages and other routine non-political matters.

Portugal

Similarly, relations with Portugal did not witness much more activity than in the previous year.

The accreditation of the new Ambassador of Portugal to Guyana is scheduled for early 2000.

Belgium

From the Caracas post, there was not much new economic and other relations initiated during the year under report.

The new Ambassador to Guyana presented his credentials in June 1999. In his speech he signalled the satisfaction of Belgium in taking part in the development in Guyana, through its contribution to the European Union.

Algeria

Apart from the receipt of the CV of the new President of Algeria, H.E. Abdelaziz Bonteflika in April 1999 there was not much contact with Algeria, through the Caracas post. A response to a request by Algeria for information on Guyana's accession to the Treaty for the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons was forwarded to the Embassy of Algeria early in the year.

Panama

There was no appreciable growth in contacts during the year under report.

Czech Republic

A new non-resident Ambassador of the Czech Republic to Guyana, based in Caracas, is to be accredited in 2000. With this it is anticipated that further contact with this country will be advanced.

South Africa

Relations between Guyana and South Africa were further advanced in 1999. In her accreditation speech in February 1999 the new South African Ambassador noted that South Africa was cognizant of the fact that democratization in both Guyana and South Africa took a long time, and was not without pain and sacrifice, where both countries went through unstable and difficult times.

South Africa, in an effort to stimulate travel, business and tourism contacts with Guyana waived visa requirements for Guyanese nationals. In spite of distances, there is potential for increased contacts in these areas and also at the cultural level.

The attendance by the President of Guyana at the Commonwealth Head of Govern-

ment Summit in December 1999 provided an added boost to strengthening the relations between the two countries.

Republic of Korea

In July, this year a new non-resident Ambassador of Korea was accredited to Georgetown. The Republic of Korea also extended an invitation for a representative from Guyana to attend a Seminar on Partnership with Latin America in Seoul in December.

The usual transmission of documents continued to be carried out.

A nominee from the Ministry of Fisheries, Crops and Livestock was presented to the Embassy of Korea for the Course: "Deep Sea and Coastal Fishing Technology", under the special training programme of the Organisation of American States and the Government of the Republic of Korea.

Multilaterals

During 1999 the Head of Mission participated in meetings of the Rio Group (Head of State and Ministerial) as well as a number of preparatory meetings leading up to and including the first ever European Union - Latin America and the Caribbean Heads of State meeting in Rio de Janeiro in June. The Head of Mission also formed part of Guyana's delegation to preparatory and Ministerial meetings of the Association of Caribbean States. The Head of Mission and mission staff attended all working group meetings of the Treaty of Amazonian Cooperation and the Latin American Economic System including the Ministerial meeting of the latter organization in October.

SELA

This year was an important one for the organisation. It saw the election of a new Permanent Secretary and the freezing of the post of Deputy Permanent Secretary for at least one

year. The new Permanent Secretary, Mr. Otto Boye Soto, former Chilean Ambassador to Caracas, was the only official candidate for the post of Permanent Secretary, and was elected by acclamation.

The Mission continued to facilitate the transmission of documents between the Ministry and the Permanent Secretariat, and provided assistance in coordinating attendance at Meetings and Seminars by representatives of Guyana.

The most important event this year was the XXV Regular Meeting of the Latin American Council which took place in Caracas, from October 26-28, 1999. The VIII Extraordinary Meeting of the Latin American Council held in March primarily considered the financial situation of the Secretariat, a situation for which repeated calls were made to member states to satisfy payment commitments.

Three meetings of the Ad Hoc Working Group took place during the year to deliberate inter-alia the future shape of the organisation.

Guyana was represented by the Mission staff at all the above-mentioned meetings.

Treaty of Amazonian Cooperation

The Embassy participated in several meetings of the Treaty of Amazonian Cooperation in Caracas.

The question of the slow pace of the ratification of the Protocol of Amendment to the Treaty of Amazonian Cooperation remained of concern at year end particularly for Brazil which was scheduled to take over the Permanent Secretariat early in 2000.

On the matter of the translation of documents to English, the Embassy made several approaches to the Pro Tempore Secretary and there was a noticeable improvement. There were however, still large important technical documents which only appeared in Spanish. Continuing efforts were made to obtain at least a summary.

TRADE FACILITATION

In 1999, the Mission continued to undertake economic diplomacy through meetings and talks with the local private sector at which those desirous of doing business with Guyana were provided with information necessary for establishing contacts and for guidance on trade policies.

1999 also was a year in which the Mission attended to several Guyanese companies wishing to source goods from Venezuela for manufacturing and retail purposes. Trade Facilitation services provided to these companies were those of: locating appropriate counterpart firms, identifying contact levels, arranging meetings in cases where required, assisting in preparing product documentation, locating shipping and customs agencies and sourcing cost, liaising with Venezuelan producers and distributors as needed, keeping local companies informed of stages of transactions. Additional assistance facilitated included interpreting, translation, and internal and external travel logistics.

With regard to business persons travelling to Guyana from Venezuela, the Mission facilitated the preparation of agendas, contact numbers and provided brief a background on Guyana, in particular on cultural and culinary aspects.

TRADE AND TOURISM PROMOTION

Promotion of Guyanese exportable goods and services was pursued, in particular, Sugar, Rum, Seafood and Kaolin. It is anticipated that export of Guyanese seafood to Venezuela will increase. Kaolin has now entered the local market for the first time. Venezuela has embargoed sugar imports for the time being. Guyanese rum was unable to penetrate the local market partly through distributors' efforts to protect the local rum industry.

Efforts to this end included proactive participation by the trade office in minor negotiations held with potential importers, as well as zealous marketing of exportable commodities.

Institutional attempts to promote trade between the two countries were also made. Meetings were held with several Chambers of Commerce in and out of Caracas and the

Mission attended a meeting convened by CONSECOMERCIO, a local trade bureau, to seek means by which bi-lateral trade could be enhanced. That organisation expressed a firm interest in strengthening ties with the Caribbean and informally proposed holding a round of meetings in 2000 to work towards increasing commercial links.

In line with improving infrastructure for trade and tourism, further assistance was provided to Venezuelan Airline PROMARDI in its attempts to re-commence commercial flights to Guyana through following up with the Civil Aviation Department and by co-sponsoring a Toast for the airline at the Mission. Conversations were also sustained with another small airline in order to discuss establishing links with Guyana. To date however, direct flights to Guyana are yet to be re-inaugurated.

Several members of the Venezuelan business community expressed interest in the establishment of a Guyana-Venezuela Chamber of Commerce. A concrete proposal for such a Chamber, submitted to the Mission by a Venezuelan political activist, was discouraged because this would have paralleled the Joint Business Council.

Trade

Trade and investment information on Guyana was provided to a local Web page which specializes in commercial information.

The Embassy attempted to promote trade by meeting with, giving verbal and printed country briefs as well as facilitating visits to Guyana of the Mexican and Colombian Commercial Counselors, and by holding conversations with the Argentine Embassy and a Japanese Corporation on trade possibilities.

The cancelled GUYEXPO was also used as an occasion to send flyers and promotional letters on trade, tourism and industry to a large number of Chambers of Commerce and companies in Venezuela.

Tourism

With regard to tourism, the Mission continued to acquaint persons visiting Guyana about tourist destinations and handed out brochures and pamphlets as available.

The Mission was also set to facilitate the participation of national companies in the 1st Caribbean Rum and Tourism Festival originally slated for 10th - 13th November, 1999 in Margarita, Venezuela, which was later postponed due to force majeure.

GUYANA/VENEZUELA BILATERAL TRADE REVIEW

The following is a summary of bilateral trade per sector:

Requests continued to be received from the Venezuelan commercial sector for information on trade possibilities and for contacts in the local private sector. The majority of these requests were from companies looking to expand exports of manufactured goods and wishing to establish distributorships.

Timber

Information packages containing the names of local Timber and Sawmilling companies and species of wood found in Guyana were given to a few interested persons.

Rice

Several requests for rice from Guyana were attended to this year. In one case the information was requested for export to Middle East and European countries.

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Mining

Efforts were made to assist entry into the Venezuelan market of local Kaolin.

Energy Sectors

A few companies expressed an interest in supplying petroleum products including diesel and gasoline to Guyana. These companies were provided with contact numbers for the Guyana Energy Authority.

Sugar

The groundwork was set for the future exploitation of the natural Venezuelan market for sugar, after discussions held between the Ambassador of Guyana in Caracas, the Venezuelan Ambassador in Georgetown and representatives of the Guyana Sugar Corporation.

Fishing Industry

Potential markets were informed of Guyanese exportable offer of fish and seafood crops for Venezuela, upon requests made by Guyanese businesses.

Telecommunications

Interest was expressed by a Swedish telephone company in establishing a mobile cellular telephone business in Guyana.

REVIEW OF CONSULAR ACTIVITIES

Altogether, the Mission continued to strive to ensure that limited resources were optimally employed. For example, consular visits to areas outside Caracas were advertised some two weeks beforehand to ensure that turnout would be satisfactory and consular officers often utilized local bus services to arrive at their destinations. Similarly, locations used by the Mission for these visits were provided at no cost to the Embassy by the community. Publicizing visits generally involves developing informative flyers at the Mission, copies of which are faxed to members of the community who deliver them to strategic points.

The attendance of the Embassy at the Annual Consular Corps Convention in June 1999 provided a useful opportunity to interact with other Embassies on issues related to some of the difficulties nationals faced in Venezuela.

The specific situation of Guyanese in Venezuela occupied the attention of the Embassy throughout the year. Following the decision of Cabinet and consultation with the Ministries of Home Affairs and Foreign Affairs, the Embassy worked out a strategy for the implementation of the decision to issue passports to Guyanese who had never before been issued with a Guyana passport. All systems were put in place and the requisite forms, instruction sheets and fees were worked out by year end for implementation in February 2000.

Some 170 new passports were re-issued, 204 renewed and 15 extended during the year. 22 Emergency Certificates were also issued.

Some three hundred and thirty four (334) visas were issued in 1999. Of this number 28 were business visas. Several Guyanese visited for various personal and other reasons. There was also a large Venezuelan contingent which travelled to Guyana for the Main Big Lime 1999.

The issuing of visas is a significant portion of the Embassy's Consular work. The visa section can however be assisted much more if speedy replies are received in respect of approval from the Ministry of Home Affairs for issuing of visas to Colombian nationals.

The Head of Mission performed 15 weddings during 1999.

Visits to States

During this year consular visits were paid to the states of Anzoategui (February), Carabobo (June) and Bolivar (August).

During these visits officers provided the usual consular services as follows:

- Renewal of Passports
- Extensions of Passports
- Receipt of Birth Certificate Applications
- Receipt of lost passport reports

In the case of Bolivar State, conversations regarding the situation of the resident Guyanese colony were sustained with the Mayoress of Caroni Municipality (a zone in which there is a large Guyanese community), the Head of Immigration Services of Puerto Ordaz and Humanas Dignitas (a local Human Rights Organization). The meeting with the Immigration Office facilitated the renewal of the "White Paper" given to Guyanese by local authorities; a process which reports indicate had been inactive for a few months.

Conversations with the Mayors revealed a dire underlying necessity for improved representation by and for the community, in particular, the need to have an official representative in the State of Bolivar.

Guyanese in Distress

This year, the Mission attended to a number of Guyanese. In the majority of cases financial assistance was provided, conditioned as loans, until such a time as the recipients could repay.

The Mission attended to a national hospitalized with the AIDS virus and who later passed away. In this instance items for personal care were provided and a visit was paid to the patient at the hospital.

Assistance was also provided to victims of flooding in Venezuela, and involved the location of families in the flood hit area to ensure their well being. Foodstuff was also provided to the victims. Several persons who lost their passports in the flooding were assisted in the process of obtaining new passports.

Guyanese Imprisoned

Follow-up action was taken on behalf of two nationals incarcerated in Venezuela. One of these, Robert Persaud, imprisoned in the State of Bolivar, was released this year. The second prisoner, Ray Garrett, located in the State of Carabobo, is still serving sentence. Both were remanded to prison for trafficking in narcotics. The role of the Embassy included relaying messages and requests to their respective families in Guyana and dealing with local prison authorities and social workers.

Deportees

Three Guyanese refused permission to remain in the United States and one deported from French Guyana were returned to Guyana via Venezuela. In all instances the Mission maintained contact with the individuals, Venezuelan Immigration and the Home Affairs Ministry in order to facilitate the return of these nationals to Guyana.

Another three Guyanese, en route to Costa Rica, were refused boarding by the Costa Rican airline office in Caracas due to irregularities noted on their travel documents. These persons voluntarily returned to Guyana.

Community Activities

Four Games Days were held at Mission for the Guyanese community. Objectives of these events included bringing everyone out for a day of entertainment, and to update those present on news from Guyana. The Embassy also donated a trophy to the Guyana Independence Cricket Match and hosted two events for visiting cricketers.

PROTOCOL

During the year the Mission extended customary courtesy and hospitality to a number of Guyanese visiting or transiting Venezuela. These included the Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Honourable Minister of Fisheries, Crops & Livestock and the Minister of Education, our Ambassador to Brazil and her party, a delegation to a TAC meeting, a number of journalists and a Guyanese Cricket team from Miami which came to play a round of Independence cricket matches. The Head of Mission and Staff attended approximately 100 protocolar events during the course of the year.

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

Personnel Matters

The Embassy bid farewell to Principal Foreign Service Officer, Mr. Robert McKenzie in March 1999 and welcomed Mrs. Jennifer Tiwari, Senior Foreign Service Officer I, who arrived at the end of February 1999.

At the level of the locally recruited staff the Embassy lost the services of the typist/receptionist and the messenger/driver. The post of typist/receptionist was filled along with the recruitment of another bilingual typist. The post of messenger/driver is yet to be filled.

The Embassy's previous recommendations regarding Spanish language training, for both diplomatic and non-diplomatic staff are still relevant. Also the Embassy wishes to recommend that funds be made available for upgrading the computer skills of the clerical staff as this would improve the productivity of the Embassy.

The Embassy was able to negotiate with proprietors of two rented buildings to have the rental at a reasonably low cost as compared with the average prices paid because of the rising demand on housing accommodation. (Sub-Head 141).

Local official trips to perform Consular Services to the Guyanese Community outside of Caracas were limited to three (Sub-Head 161).

Eighty percent (80 %) of the monthly remittance received for operational expenses was utilised accumulatively under the following Sub-Heads:-

- (a) 171 - Local Travels & Subsistance.
- (b) 141 - Rental of Building: Expenses incurred under this sub-Head for the year totalled almost sixty-four (64 %) percent of the year's remittance. This has been a trend for the past nine years. This means that the Annual Estimates of Expenditure will unavoidably need to cater for increases under this subhead unless measures are taken in the line of purchasing at least two buildings for the Embassy and the Residence.
- (c) 164 - Vehicles Spares & Services: An extensive amount of repairs were done on the Mission's five year old Buick Century. The cost on renewal of Insurance Premiums for the two Governmental owned vehicles amounted to 75 % on funds allocated under this sub-Head.
- (d) 171 - Telephone Charges - Venezuela has always had one of the highest telephone rates in the world. Costs on International calls & faxes made especially to Georgetown, Guyana were double the cost as compared with other International calls due to the fact that there is no direct connection and although the Mission tried to send all non-urgent documents by diplomatic bag it was still difficult to cut costs under this subhead. (Please note that the Mission owes CANTV a total of G\$1,037,385, Telephone Charges on line number 978-27-81, an outstanding liability prior to January 1997, and which has not yet been eliminated in spite of numerous representations made by the Embassy.
- (e) 172 - Electricity Charges - Electricity rates for the year had increased by 40%.

Budgetary Allocation & Expenditure in 1999

The Mission received its Preliminary Budget Allocation for the year 1999 of which its

Expenditure Statement to period 31/12/99, showed that expenses incurred under many of its subheads had exceeded their allocated amount.

The inflation rate at the close of the year has been estimated at 103% with a considerable rise in the first semester.

Throughout the year there was a continuous devaluation of the Bolivares and although the US\$ yielded more to the Bolivares the prices of commodities and services kept rising, bringing the cost of all necessary expenditures incurred for the functioning of the Embassy to at least twice as expected, although in many instances efforts were made to cut costs on expenses incurred under Other Charges.

The Mission did not venture on producing its quarterly newsletter for the year although there were plans to start producing monthly in-house copies as from September 1999. (Sub-Head 124).

Supplementary Allocation

A request was made by the Mission for the provision of supplementary funds as early as August, 1999 but to date no response or approval has been received.

Suggestions are that if Supplementary Provisions are to be provided, approval should be granted as early as possible so that the Mission could have accomplished most of the activities planned based on its Work Programme on or before the final day of the current year.

Capital Expenditure

A memo was received stating that approval was given for the purchasing of one computer. Estimates on the costs were sent to the Ministry. The Mission still awaits the funding of this project, which is critical to the smooth execution of its functions.

Additional equipment needed to facilitate greater efficiency at the mission, include two other computers to replace two obsolete 286 acquired in 1990, two typewriters since those that are in use had to be repaired several times though out the year, costs exceeded the price for a new one, an iron safe for financial and other security purposes, a new fax machine and three air-conditioners.

The lower flat of the Chancery and the office of the Ambassador were provided with new curtains. Six pedestal fans, and three office chairs were also purchased based on funds received for Capital Expenditure 1998.

The Internet & E-mail Services were also installed at the Embassy.

Revenue

A total of one million one hundred and thirty-two thousand (G\$1,132,000) Guyana Dollars was collected from the issuance of Visas, Re-issuing of New Passports, Renewals, Extensions, Emergency Certificates, Marriage Licences, Power of Attorney etc.

CONCLUSION

The closing of the millennium brought to a close another very active year at the Guyana Embassy in Caracas, Venezuela during which great thought and care was given to the promotion of Guyana's interest and the defence of Guyana's territorial integrity.

On balance the Embassy managed to maintain a thorough approach to its tasks on all fronts. This undoubtedly would not have been achieved however, without the full cooperation and close relationship with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other Ministries.

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HAVANA

EMBASSY OF GUYANA

Mutual goodwill continued to characterize the relations between Guyana and Cuba in 1999. An obvious fillip to those relations was the appointment of Guyana's first Ambassador to Cuba since 1992. The Mission's business, which throughout the period October 1992 to September 1999 was handled at the level of a Charge 'd' Affaires, was raised more than a notch with the Ambassador's accreditation on September 8, 1999, and Cuban and Guyana watchers lost no time conveying their pleasure with the appointment.

The task in the last quarter of the year, therefore, was to build on the evident goodwill, and thereby continue to advance Guyana's interest in a country with which we have had diplomatic relations for over twenty-five years. Ground had to be regained, too, from newer CARICOM comers like Jamaica and Belize which are treating relations with Cuba quite seriously. Indeed in the area of transportation, Jamaica has been established as a hub into Cuba, effectively competing with the entrenched Panama connection.

If the appointment of the Ambassador may be seen as a plus, the concurrent increase in the number of Guyanese students in Cuba added to the positive direction of Guyana - Cuba relations. In October, seven Guyanese students arrived in Cuba to begin studies in Higher Education under the CARICOM-CUBA Scholarship Programme. Their arrival brought the number of Guyanese students in Cuba to ten.* Had there not been the unfortunate premature departure from Cuba of two students, who found the reception arrangements not to their liking, and the very late completion of arrangements by yet another, the number would have been thirteen.

I am aware of the presence of an additional Guyanese student (born in Cuba of Guyanese parents) who is on a scholarship here but has no contractual obligations with the Guyana Government.

Activities During the Year

During the course of the year the Mission participated in activities held in observance of Guyanese, Cuban and third countries' National Days and other anniversaries.

Among the foregoing were:

- 23 February 1999 - Friendly gathering hosted by the Caribbean Association of Cuba on the occasion of Guyana's Republic Anniversary (National Day)
- 21 May 1999 - Activity on the occasion of Guyana's 33rd Independence Anniversary, hosted by the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP).
- 27 September 1999 - Reception hosted by the Cuban Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MINREX) on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the People's Republic of China.
- 20 October 1999 - Conference marking the 75th Anniversary of PAHO.

Other activities which merit some mention were:

the CARICOM - Cuba Cooperation in Human Resource Development and Culture: teaching of English and Spanish as a Second language; and

the series of receptions on the occasion of visits to Cuba by various Heads of States and Governments, among them two CARICOM Prime Ministers (Dr. Keith Mitchell of Grenada in March and Owen Arthur of Barbados in June).

Visits

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Guyana, HE Mr. Clement Rohee, paid an official visit to Cuba during 14-16 December. The visit, which was in connection with the South Summit

to be held in Havana during April 2000, coincided with that of Ambassador S.R. Insanally, Chairman of the Preparatory Committee of the South Summit.

The visit provided useful insights into the Cuban preparations for the Summit and their expectations therefore.

Bilateral Cooperation

The XXth Session of the Cuba - Guyana Joint Commission was held in Guyana during 18 - 22 October. The Mission's involvement was limited to providing inputs into the Minister's opening statement, establishing/confirming the composition of the Cuban delegation, and issuing the appropriate visas.

As a spin-off of this Joint Commission Meeting the Mission has begun interviewing Cuban Medical Brigade selectees for proficiency in English. The exercise should continue into the year-end 2000 as the Cubans strive to meet their commitment of 17 doctors and medical technicians for the Guyanese health sector. The exercise was interrupted at year end and when all attention was shifted to Venezuela following on the disastrous flood damage there. MINSAP (the Cuban Ministry of Public Health) naturally found recruitment for the Venezuelan emergency much easier than for Guyana since proficiency in a second language was not a requirement.

As an additional spinoff, the Director of the Jose Marti School of Languages has advised that two Spanish teachers have been identified from his institution for training of teachers of Spanish in Guyana's primary schools. But the exercise is on hold pending clarification from Guyana on the general terms and conditions of employment which would govern the Cuban contractees.

There was also Guyanese participation in the Havana Trade Fair (FIHAV=99), October 31 - November 5th, the exhibiting company being the food manufacturer 'Chinelle's'. Participation was coordinated by the Caribbean Export Development Agency, and the Mission's involvement was not sought. There is some hope that the Company should be able to market its products in Cuba. A hurdle, though, is certification by the Cuban Institute of

- z Hygiene and Epidemiology (the equivalent of the Guyanese Bureau of Standards). Once the company displays the necessary patience to deal with Cuban officialdom, the results could be rewarding.

In addition, the Mission has facilitated direct contracts via the Ministry of Foreign Affairs between Cuban agencies and their Guyanese counterparts. The most active in that regard has been between 'Empresa Constructora de C'aras Maritimas' of Cuba and Georgetown Seafoods Limited of Guyana for the construction of port/loading facilities for the latter.

- y Interest has also been expressed by the Cubans in the Guyanese Ministry of Public Works and Communication's initiative to have wrecks removed from the Demerara harbour; and some disappointment followed the non-attendance of the Guyanese subject Minister at the meeting of Works and Transport held in Cuba in September as a run-up to the Ibero-American Summit.

- y The 'twinning' arrangement between Georgetown, Guyana and Santiago de Cuba, on the drawing boards since 1997, was taken a step further when in December the Asamblea Municipal del Poder Popular', Santiago de Cuba proposed to the Mayor of Georgetown that he visit Cuba during January 28-29, 2000 (at the time of the CARICOM assemblage) to give effect to the proposal.

The discussions between the Guyana National Industrial Corporation (GNIC) and International Courier of Cuba as well as the Kisson housing venture using the Cuban Simplex method are just two other examples of bilateral cooperation during 1999.

Additional Positives

Two developments on the administrative front deserve mention as being positive. The first was the purchase of a new official car, which meant that headaches associated with breakdown and costly repairs could be forgotten for a while.

Another is the purchase of a computer and the almost concurrent link to the Internet and the e-mail facility.

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Consular Affairs

Travel between Guyana and Cuba remained depressed during the year. In fact, the number of requests for visas actually declined by some 26%, and continued to maintain a downward trend.

Below, for the purposes of comparison, are the statistics for visas issued over the last ten years:

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Courtesy Visas	209	80	71	86	89	86	69	34	38	31
Diplomatic Visas	10	6	6	-	5	4	15	-	2	3
Tourist Visas	8	2	24	36	30	11	43	55	30	21
Business Visas	4	-	-	2	-	1	12	2	4	0
Total	231	88	101	124	124	102	139	91	74	55

While the above figures do not include Cuban holders of diplomatic passports who do not require visas to travel to Guyana, they indicate that Guyana was not an attractive destination for Cubans during 1999. That conclusion may further be strengthened by the realization that a number of visa requests were from third-country nationals and not necessarily all Cubans.

Other consular activities were:

Overseeing the general welfare and administering funds as allowances to the PSM students in Cuba.

Making weekly visits to the Guyanese Presidential Guard, Colbert Lancaster, who continued to make commendable progress towards recovery in the Frank Pais Orthopaedic Hospital.

Facilitating the child, Mas Saeed Ishack, who was in Cuba during 29 May, 1999 to 19 July, 1999 for open-heart surgery at the Children's Hospital;

Attending to matters concerning the small number of Guyanese nationals who are married to Cubans and are resident in Cuba;

Relations with other Countries

The Mission continued to relate with third countries with resident Missions in Cuba but which were concurrently accredited to Guyana. These were Yemen, Guinea, Palestine and Zimbabwe. The Palestinian Ambassador, Imad Jada'a, is the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Trade Possibilities

The atmosphere in Cuba is definitely positive, with the building boom and the rapidly expanding tourism sector. Possibilities seem to be myriad. But three products would seem to be key and could do with aggressive marketing. These are timber, rice, and PVC pipes.

In the case of timber, it is a bit depressing to see the volume of timber which is imported from Central America. Admittedly, the timber currently in use is part of a package deal with the developers. But the Cuban Ministry of Foreign Investment and Economic Cooperation (MINVEC) has intimated a willingness on their part to resume the timber trade with Guyana. On account of the economic circumstances Cuba is passing through (the "Special Period" as it is called) and the need on the Cuban side for extended credit facilities, the Cubans may not be disposed to enter C.O.D. arrangements but they would have no difficulty in countenancing 'pay later plans' with long grace periods. Whether or not the Guyanese exporters are in a position to facilitate the Cuban building industry in this way is another matter. But we are very cognisant of the fact that the above forms part of the brief of the new Commercial Counsellor at the Cuban Embassy in Guyana.

With respect to rice, there are two broad categories of market in Cuba, viz, the tourist/expatriate and the national/domestic. For the former, the exporter would need to consider the hotel industry and the US dollar shops which require a top grade of rice in distinctive packag-

ing. For the national/domestic market there is need for a lower grade of rice, with 25 to 35 % broken, which forms part of the subsidized food basket for Cubans and distributed via the libreta. The current domination of the market by far-away Asian (largely Thai, Vietnamese and Chinese) rice could be challenged.

Thirdly, the Cuban sewage system is old and crying for modernization. The Cubans, however, are still using discredited pipes with old sewage system but in the mushrooming new buildings. But again the bottom line for the Cubans is actual cost and not necessarily aesthetics.

The Caribbean Export Development Agency (CEDA) has established an office in Havana and is prepared to lend as much assistance as possible to businessmen who would want to tap into the Cuban market. Already mentioned in this regard is Chinelle's experience at FIHAV '99.

The Jamaicans, too, have moved to established their EXIMBANK with a primary purpose of providing credit to businessmen who are seeking market access beyond Jamaica shores; and Trinidad's Republic Bank has moved a step further to establish a clone in Havana called VISCA. Given the relationship between NBIC, Guyana and the Republic Bank of Trinidad and Tobago, one would imagine that there could be positive spin-offs for Guyanese businessmen. In the circumstances, there is need to give effect to the cliché new and innovative ideas', in doing business with the Cubans.

Some Negatives

Communication

A major bugbear is communication between Guyana and Cuba. Faxed transmissions in either direction have often gone astray or for some reason were not received at the intended destinations. A spin-off has been inaction on either end in those circumstances and a consequent misconstruing of the reasons for such inaction. This realisation has led to the costly supplementing of telfax transmissions with follow-up telephone calls to determine whether the former had been received. Making those telephone calls has not been always easy

either. Oftentimes there was frustration on either end because of unexplained busy signals, or just a plain failure to make the necessary connection.

Time lag between the despatch and receipt of diplomatic bags is also cause for concern. And when a Mission receives only four (4) diplomatic bags in a year, as was the case of last year, one naturally asks oneself questions. Of course, a fifth bag was despatched (according to notification received) on December 1st, 1999, but as of the time of preparation of this report, it had not arrived in Havana.

Movement of mail from Cuba is not a problem unique to the Guyana Embassy. Some Embassies have resorted to the expensive alternative of Courier Services. The Guyana Embassy, as did the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on occasion resorted to the use of such services which guaranteed delivery at either destination in seven days. But the relative cost and the current financial strictures would make such an option unattractive except in an emergency. The realisation that the minimum cost of a package from Cuba to Guyana via DHL is US\$49 whereas the equivalent from Guyana to Cuba by the same means is less than US\$20 underscores the disadvantaged position of the Guyana Embassy, Havana.

Staffing

The current staffing situation or, more correctly, lack of staff is another matter of serious concern. Apart from the deleterious impact on the work environment, there are implications for things like leave and external and internal travel. One would certainly hope that, notwithstanding the current bleak financial landscape, urgent consideration is given to posting an Executive Officer, a Representational Officer, and a Confidential Secretary in that order of importance.

Black-outs

Then, after a period of stability, black-outs have returned with a vengeance, sometimes lasting for the entire day. One need not elaborate on the obvious disruptive consequences.

Cooperation between MINREX and MFA, Guyana

The Annual Meeting between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Cuba and Guyana was not held in 1999 although there was the visit to Cuba by the Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs, Guyana. Perhaps advantages may be taken of Foreign Minister Felipe Perez Roque's proposed CARICOM visit in the first quarter of 2000 to hold such a meeting. Or, can it be assumed that with the departure of former Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina there are new imperatives occasioning changed structures?

Concurrent Accreditations

One wonders about the stage reached in the consideration of the issue of concurrent accreditations from Havana. Guyana now enjoys diplomatic relations with all the Central American Countries. Representation, as per recollection, goes a-begging.

LONDON

GUYANA HIGH COMMISSION

Introduction

The High Commission started the new year with staff changes - the departure of Ms Sonia Elliott, First Secretary (January) and Mr Orin Alexander, Second Secretary (August), and the arrival of Miss Marion Herbert, First Secretary (January). There was also a relatively high turnover of locally recruited staff (a stenographer, Accounts Clerk, and one of two Typist/ Clerical Assistants resigned while the other left without giving notice, and the Driver/Office Assistant was dismissed). This affected the High Commission's work tremendously since the new recruits had to be trained.

The work of the High Commission was further affected with the absence of a Trade Attaché and a replacement for the Head of the Consular Section. Owing to the volume of the work in the Consular Section, Staff was tasked with additional duties.

The High Commissioner assumed the post of Dean of the Caribbean High Commissioners in July and had to perform additional responsibilities relating to the organisation of Caribbean Meetings and leading Caribbean High Commissioners at meetings and events.

It is against this background that the High Commission performed its task for the 1999 administrative year.

A Summary of Activities

Economic Matters

During 1999, one hundred and eighty (180) trade and investment enquires were responded to by mail. These were mostly about the purchase of traditional commodities such as timber, rice and sugar, although the details of exporters of craft, fruit and vegetables were

also requested. There were also several expressions of interest in investing in the mining sector. Advice was also given throughout the year to visitors to the Mission and telephone callers.

Information Package on Investment

The Registry was involved in the compilation of an investment package, which was made available to persons interested in visiting in Guyana. Extensive work was also done to create folders with information, which could be easily accessed for distribution when requests were made.

The new system established was to facilitate the dissemination of literature and information.

Advertisements and registration of interest forms for the privatisation of the following Government entities:

Guyana Printers Limited (GPL)
Guyana Stores Limited (GSL)
Linden Mining Enterprise (LINMINE)
BERBICE Mining Enterprise (BERMINE).

were circulated to forty (40) businessmen (including Guyanese) in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands and were also placed on the Mission's notice board and in the reception area.

Guyana Trade Fair

The invitation to Guyana's Trade Fair (GuyExpo '99) which was scheduled to take place at the Sophia Exhibition Centre from 21-25 July and postponed to the 1st quarter of the year 2000 were circulated to forty (40) businessmen (including Guyanese) in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, twenty-three (23) Tour Operators that offer tours to Guyana from

the United Kingdom, and selected individuals.

The invitation was also placed on the Mission's notice board and in the Mission's reception area.

Caribbean Advisory Group Meeting

The High Commission was invited by the Caribbean Advisory Group to deliver a presentation on trade and investment issues affecting Guyana at a meeting held at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on Friday 23 April.

The presentation covered all areas, including the tourism sector, to which Guyana is inviting investors.

Consignment from Portugal

The Consignment from Expo '98 held in Lisbon, Portugal was delivered to the High Commission on Tuesday April 6. The Mission paid £505.00 (ps) in custom duties. It has since been evident that it would not be possible to recoup from the sale of the items the sum paid in duties.

The Mission despatched some of the tourism material and handicraft from the above-mentioned consignment to the Guyana Embassy in Brussels for displays at the 7th International Fair in Bonn on June 12.

Mr. Peter Kempadoo - Alternative Projects for Guyana

The Mission was instrumental in arranging for Mr. Peter Kempadoo to visit Guyana and for him to acquire funds for 3 pilot projects on alternative energy which were previously earmarked for Berbice.

Tourism

In the Tourism Sector, two hundred and forty-one (241) requests were received and information despatched on tourism. During the latter part of the year the Mission received numerous requests for tourist information from persons desirous of spending Christmas and the New Year in Guyana.

In April a special tourism supplement was prepared for distribution. A copy was forwarded to the Ministry with the High Commissioner's monthly report for that month.

The Mission continues to receive numerous request for posters, maps and photographs of Guyana.

Launching of Guyana World - Tourism and Cultural Festival

The High Commission organised a programme to promote the Cultural and Tourism Festival of the Guianas, which was scheduled for 26th and 27th November at the Sophia National Exhibition Park in Georgetown.

As part of the awareness drive the High Commission, in collaboration with the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Industry held a two-day session to sensitise persons on the event. In this regard, businessmen with links in Guyana, tour operators, and personnel from the news media were invited to attend a meeting on Thursday, June 24th at the High Commission to be briefed by consultant, Mr. Al Creighton who was in London to promote the Festival.

Invitations were also issued to members of Guyanese organisations, selective individuals and the aforementioned groups to attend the Festival's launching on Friday, June 25th at the High Commission.

The 1998 Caribbean World Magazine Annual International Award

Guyana won the prestigious 1998 Caribbean World Magazine Annual International

Award as the best Caribbean Eco-Region for the second consecutive year. The High Commissioner accepted the award on Guyana's behalf at the Caribbean World Magazine Annual International awards ceremony held in the Palace Suite, Royal Garden Hotel on 2nd March.

A press release on the awards was issued and circulated to all the tour operators who offer tours to Guyana from the United Kingdom and Europe. A copy was forwarded to the Ministry on 3rd March.

Culture and Sports

Following a visit to London by the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports, the High Commission has been communicating with the Commonwealth Institute regarding the shipment of paintings and a miniature sculpture of Cuffy to Guyana. Information regarding the theft of the prayer wheels of the Cuffy statue was relayed to the Minister.

Further to correspondence from the Commonwealth Institute regarding three dioramas which were on display, the High Commission viewed them and indicated that it would uplift the diorama of the 'Sugar Factory' for display at the Mission. However, on its transferral to the Mission it was discovered that its size prevented it from passing through the doors. It was returned to the Institute.

As a result of the efforts of the High Commission a team from Guyana was able to participate in the 1999 World Masters Weightlifting Championship which was held in Glasgow, Scotland from 5th to 11th September 1999. Following a request from the Minister, the Mission contacted the Guyana Charity Ball Committee in London, which responded by donating 220 to the team. The Mission also facilitated the team with transportation and accommodation during the period they were in London; hosted a function for the handing over of the Committee's contribution; and transmitted letters of congratulations to those members who were successful at breaking a world record, and winning gold and bronze medals.

World Pool Championships

The Mission was instrumental in having the National Sports Commission of Guyana support Mr. Ramesh Gokul in his bid to represent Guyana at the World Pool Championships held in Blackpool from 27th May to 5th June.

Mr. Gohul is a Guyanese who migrated to the United Kingdom. He was featured in the Mission's newsletter issued in May.

Miss Guyana UK Pageant

The reigning Miss UK Queen, Miss Angela Abrams departed London for Guyana on Sunday, February 21, for two weeks.

The Mission notified Hon. Gail Teixeira, Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the arrival of Miss Abrams who was chaperoned by her sister, Andrea Abrams.

The Mission arranged for Miss Angela Abrams and her sister to be met on arrival at the Cheddi Jagan Timehri International Airport and for the Ministry of Culture and the local liaison officer for the organisers of the Miss Guyana UK Pageant, Ms Karen Nero, to prepare a planned programme of activities for Miss Abrams.

Reception for Miss Guyana

Miss Indra Changa who was Guyana's representative to the Miss World Pageant held in London on 4th December was welcomed on arrival at Heathrow Airport by Ms Marion Herbert, First Secretary. The High Commission also maintained communication with the Ministry of Culture during Miss Changa's participation in the contest.

The High Commissioner hosted a reception on 7th December for Miss Changa who met with Guyanese resident in the United Kingdom who are involved in tourism, culture and fashion. Discussions included the promotion of eco-tourism in Guyana.

Attendance at the Launch of the Global Cultural Diversity Congress 2000

The High Commissioner attended a reception, which was hosted jointly by the Commission for Racial Equality and the Australian Multicultural Foundation to launch the Global Cultural Diversity Congress 2000.

The reception was held at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 8 February, and was designed to generate interest and participation on a global scale. At the launch, the Australian Government, host of the first conference, formally handed over the event to Britain.

All necessary information on the Congress was sent to the Hon. Gail Teixerira, Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports.

Some of the Highlights were as follows:-

The Commonwealth

The High Commission continued efforts to achieve its objective for relations with the Commonwealth in 1999, particularly in light of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting held in Durban, South Africa from November 12 - 15. The High Commission was involved in preparatory work for CHOGM as well as the regular activities of the Commonwealth Secretariat and related Commonwealth bodies. It apprised the Ministry of developments within the Secretariat and Commonwealth Countries.

During the reporting period there were also meetings held between the Commonwealth Secretary-General and High Commissioners on issues of mutual interest.

The High Commissioner performed the following tasks:

- Prepared several Briefs on issues such as Small States, the Commonwealth Foundation and the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group, which were to be

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discussed at the Meeting. The Briefs contained views and recommendations, which were useful for discussions.

- Prepared a Brief on the Guyana/Venezuela Border controversy, which was despatched to all members of Commonwealth members states in the UK prior to CHOGM to apprise them of the issue. This strategy was employed since a decision was taken to ensure that the matter be placed on the agenda in an effort to garner support from the Commonwealth states as well.
- Prepared official individual programme for President Jagdeo, Minister Rohee and spouse with regard to CHOGM.
- Prepared speaking points for the President for official meetings with Queen etc.
- Submitted brief points to Minister Rohee with regard to CHOGM.

Pre-WHA Meeting of Commonwealth Health Ministers held in Geneva on May 16.

The High Commission was represented on June 25, at three Commonwealth meetings, namely, the meeting of the Finance Committee; the Second Joint Body Meeting of the Secretariat Finance Committee, the CFTC Board of Representatives, and the Chairpersons of the Commonwealth Youth Programme and the Commonwealth Science Council; and the Fifty-fourth meeting of the CFTC Board of Representatives.

First Joint Body Meeting of the Commonwealth Secretariat Finance Committee, the Board of Representatives of the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation (CFTC) and the Chairpersons of the Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP) and the Commonwealth Science Council (CSC). This meeting was attended by the High Commission.

Commonwealth Consultative Group Meeting on Small States held in London on 16 September.

Commonwealth Finance Ministers and Senior Finance Officials meetings held from

September 21-23 at the Secretariat.

Commonwealth Caribbean Workshop on Trade in Services held in St. Kitts from 30 September to 2 November.

World Renewable Energy Network (WREN) Seminar.

Eight Meeting of the Consultative Group on Small States on 28 October.

Annual General Meeting of the Board of Governors of the Commonwealth Institute on 30th November. The Mission was represented.

Meeting of the Board of Governors of the Commonwealth Foundation held at the Secretariat on December 8.

The Sixth Meeting of Commonwealth Ministers Responsible for Women's Affairs scheduled for New Delhi, India from August 22 to 25 was postponed to a date no later than February 2000.

The Commonwealth Secretariat, in association with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund hosted the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative Consultation Meeting on March 5. The High Commissioner represented Guyana and his contribution was included in the final report emanating from the meeting. The High Commission continues to monitor the Initiative and to relay relevant information to the Ministry.

At the financial level, arrears of contribution to the Commonwealth Secretariat's Budgets are as follows:

Commonwealth Secretariat	-	\$180,861
made up as follows:	1999/2000	\$58,197.00
	1998/99	\$61,222.00
	1997/98	\$60,230.00
	1996/97	\$ 1,212.80
Commonwealth Science Council	-	\$23,770.00

Commonwealth Foundation	-	\$56,113.00
Commonwealth Institute	-	\$ 4,500.00
Commonwealth Legal Advisory Science	-	\$ 2,500.00

The High Commissioner met with Ms. Angela Strachan, Chief Programme Officer of Export and Industrial Development of the Commonwealth Secretariat at the High Commission on 17 August.

Ms. Strachan indicated an absence of projects from Guyana, the last known being that for a Trade Policy Consultant.

The Ministry's attention was drawn to a letter copied to the High Commissioner from the Chief Programme Officer informing of the Commonwealth Caribbean Workshop on Trade in Services held in St Kitts from 30th December to 2nd November.

It was also brought to the Ministry's attention that Ms. Strachan had urged Guyana's participation in the Workshop since it was expected that the output would prove beneficial in discussions on hemispheric negotiations such as the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). Also the availability of funding from the Export and Industrial Development Division for a representative from Guyana which included airfare, accommodation and meals was communicated.

The Ministry was informed of the appointment of the new Director of the Commonwealth Foundation, Mr. Colin Ball.

Vacancies within the Commonwealth Secretariat, included those of Commonwealth Secretary-General, Deputy Secretary-General (Development Co-operation), Deputy Director of the Commonwealth Foundation and Senior Executive Officer in the Joint Office for Commonwealth Permanent Missions to the United Nations in New York.

The High Commissioner forwarded the following information about the vacancy for the post of Deputy Director of the Commonwealth Foundation:

The Ministry was informed that a Board of Governors Meeting held on 17 June, it was

agreed that a Search Committee be formed to start the process of recruitment.

It was further reported that preference would be given to applicants from developing countries within the Commonwealth notwithstanding that the appointment would be on the basis of merit. Particular consideration was to be given to applicants from Africa and the Caribbean since over the years, these two regions have not been adequately represented at senior levels.

The Commonwealth Secretariat's Sixteenth Induction Programme for Commonwealth Diplomats held during the period 13-17 September was attended by Miss Marion Herbert of the High Commission.

The High Commission was represented at Westminster Abbey and at a reception hosted by the Commonwealth Secretary-General in observance of the 50th Anniversary of the Modern Commonwealth. Information regarding the Celebration was forwarded to the Ministry as well as the Commonwealth Day speeches made by Her Majesty the Queen and the Secretary-General.

The High Commission participated in the Commonwealth Countries League Fair held on November 6. The two Guyanese booths were very successful and allowed for the High Commission to make a donation of seven hundred pounds (\$700.00).

Reports of the activities in which the High Commission was involved were submitted separately during the course of the year.

Some of the highlights were as follows:

CABI

The High Commissioner as Vice-Chairman of the Executive Council of CAB International was requested by the Council to be on the panel responsible for selecting the new Director General CABI. Mr. Dennis Blight was appointed and succeeded Mr. Jim Gilmore as the new Director General of CAB International.

The High Commissioner succeeded Dr. John Radcliffe as Chairman of the Council in the year 2000. The members of the Council of CABI have approved his nomination. This is an important and significant appointment for Guyana.

IMO

Activities of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) continue to be monitored by the High Commission.

The Mission despatched correspondence regarding requests for support for re-election to category C of the IMO Council from Korea, Spain, Australia, Poland, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, Panama, Finland, Singapore, Philippines, Mexico and for election from Malta, the Bahamas, South Africa and Morocco.

Elections were held during the 21st Regular Session of the IMO Assembly from 15 to 26 November in London. Guyana was represented by Ms. Marion Herbert to support the Bahamas candidature for election to category C of the IMO Council in keeping with a CARICOM decision to support the Bahamas Candidature.

ISO

The Mission prepared and submitted two letters to the ISO authorising Mrs. Carolyn Barry to attend the 15th and 16th Session of the ISO Council meetings during the reporting period.

WTO

The High Commission continued to monitor the work of the World Trade Organisation. Background papers on many issues were forwarded to Georgetown on a regular basis. Requests for support from Sweden, Venezuela, Brazil, United Kingdom, Poland and France for candidatures to fill one of the vacant positions of Deputy Director General of the WTO were forwarded to the Ministry.

As of 20 September the Mission commenced despatch via diplomatic pouch of the World Trade News sent by the World Trade Organisation, to the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Industry.

The High Commission apprised the Ministries of Trade, Tourism and Industry and Foreign Affairs of developments leading up to the Third Ministerial Conference of the WTO held in Seattle from November 30- December 3, 1990 and was involved in administrative arrangements for attendance at the meeting by Guyana.

In addition, as preparations were made for the Conference, the High Commission remained the principal point of contact between the WTO and Guyana.

The Mission also forwarded to the Ministry an invitation from the WTO for Guyana to be represented at the briefings for WTO Members/Observers, held at the WTO Headquarters.

Mr. Neville Totaram of the National Advisory Committee on External Negotiations (NACEN) represented the Government of Guyana.

UNESCO

The High Commission continues to be the channel through which UNESCO correspondence is transmitted to His Excellency Professor Dabydeen.

A Note from the CARICOM Secretariat regarding a CARICOM office at UNESCO was transmitted to Professor Dabydeen. The Secretariat had requested responses to the proposal for a revised formula of payment. Subsequent communication from the Minister of Foreign Affairs indicating that Guyana was not in a position to afford joint representation was transmitted to Professor Dabydeen.

A request from Vietnam for support from Member States of UNESCO for its decade of celebration of 990th and 100th anniversaries of Thang Long (Vietnam's capital city of Hanoi) during 2000-2010 was forwarded to the Ministry.

Relations with Britain

The Mission continued to monitor developments in the country of post but was severely impeded in performing this important function due to a shortage of staff.

The Guyana High Commission was among the Caribbean High Commissions which agreed to forward to the British Foreign Secretary, the Rt. Hon. Robin Cook, the statement by CARICOM Heads of Government on plutonium shipments.

A Report of the UK Government Reshuffle and a list of the Cabinet was sent to the Ministry on 8 August.

The High Commissioner was invited to address the Conservative Party's Foreign and Commonwealth Council Meeting at the Conservation Central Office on Monday 25th January. The address focused on the political development of Guyana from 1940 to present.

Relations with other European Countries

The High Commissioner is accredited to the French Republic, the Netherlands, the Czech Republic, the Russian Federation and the Holy See. As part of the Work Programme of the Mission he is required to visit each of these countries once a year to pursue Guyana's interests. However, owing to the acute shortage of Funds the High Commissioner has been unable to fulfill this function.

In a former Work Programme the High Commission had submitted a budget outlining the sums need for periodic visits to these countries. So far, progress has not been made in this area and more so, a response was never received.

Caribbean High Commissioners' Meeting

The High Commissioner attended the Caribbean High Commissioners Meeting held

on January 26, 1999. The following are the important issues of the meeting.

Officials of the War Pensions Office and the West Indian Ex-Servicemen's Association informed the meeting of the possibility of a form of compensation for West Indians who suffered disabilities while serving the British Armed Forces. The relevant documentation was sent to the Ministry for onward transmission to the Guyana Legion;

A paper on Capital Punishment in the Caribbean was circulated for review by the High Commissioners to be included in a new draft for distribution to relevant persons and groups on the Caribbean's position on the matter; and

The meeting was briefed by Guyana's High Commissioner on arrangements for a meeting between Caribbean High Commissioners and Jubilee 2000. It was decided that High Commissioners should attend to sensitise the group about Caribbean problems including debt relief.

The Guyana High Commissioner was appointed Dean of the Caribbean High Commissioners. He is currently Deputy Dean of the Commonwealth Diplomatic Corps.

In his capacity as Dean of the Caribbean High Commissioners, the High Commissioner chaired two High Commissioners Meeting, one on May 17th with Baroness Scotland, Caribbean Advisory Group at the Barbados High Commission and the other on June 24th. The High Commissioner also led a delegation to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 11th May to discuss the banana issue.

Meeting with West India Committee/Members of Parliament

The High Commissioner, the Dean of the Caribbean Diplomatic Corps, along with two other High Commissioners from the Caribbean attended a luncheon meeting with a group of Members of Parliament, businessmen and representatives of the West India Committee on 7 July, at Tate and Lyle Headquarters.

The meeting was part of a lobby exercise by Caribbean High Commissioners to

sensitise Mps, businessmen and other groups about EU-ACP negotiations and other issues in the Caribbean.

A report on the meeting was submitted to the last High Commissioner's meeting held at the Guyana High Commission on 14 September.

Shipment of Nuclear Waste through the Caribbean Sea

The High Commissioner in his capacity as Dean of the Caribbean High Commissioners headed a delegation of Caribbean High Commissioners to a meeting with Baroness Symons at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 21 July.

The purpose of the meeting was to convey the concern of the Governments of the Caribbean about the shipment of Nuclear Waste through the Caribbean Seas that could result in human and environmental damage to the region.

It was reported that Baroness Symons advised that the shipments carrying the nuclear waste were adhering to the laws of the sea and the nuclear waste was being transported in a safe manner.

The Minister was nevertheless informed that Governments in the Caribbean were not convinced of the safety of the ships using the Caribbean Sea for the transportation of nuclear waste.

Meeting between Caribbean High Commissioners and the Caribbean Advisory Group

As Dean of the Caribbean High Commissioners the High Commissioner for Guyana was tasked with the responsibility of preparing the items for the agenda for discussion at the above-mentioned meeting which was held at Cromwell House on 1st December. The High Commissioner also chaired the meeting jointly with the Acting Chairman of the Caribbean Advisory Group, Lady Hollick.

The purpose of the meeting was to share ideas on how Britain and the Caribbean could combine to advance Caribbean interests in Britain.

The Caribbean Advisory Group also met with Caribbean High Commissioners regarding the matter of index-linked pensions. The meeting emanated from the concern expressed by many Caribbean nationals who have reached pensionable age in the UK and are desirous of returning home but are not eligible for index-linked pensions.

Caribbean High Commissioners Meeting with Baroness Scotland

The Note of the Meeting held between Caribbean High Commissioners and Baroness Scotland, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs held at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 25 November was forwarded to the Ministry on 8 December.

Matters discussed included:

- Baroness Scotland's recent visit to the Caribbean and North America.
- Caribbean Forum 2000
- Caribbean Advisory Group
- EU/Latin America Summit in Rio
- Update on Bananas
- Small States
- Transshipment of Nuclear material through the Caribbean Sea
- OECD Harmful Tax Competition

Second UK/Caribbean Forum

The Ministry had been apprised of the discussions between Caribbean High Commissioners and officials of the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office regarding arrangements for the Second UK/Caribbean Forum.

The proposed agenda was also forwarded to the Minister of Foreign Affairs for his comments.

HE Bharrat Jagdeo in his capacity at the time as Minister of Finance was accompanied by the High Commissioner on 21st June to a Joint meeting with the British Treasury Department and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. This meeting was prior to the Paris club meeting.

Visit to Guyana of Mr. Bowen Wells, Conservative Member of Parliament

Mr. Bowen Wells, Conservative Member of Parliament visited Guyana from 23rd to 28th September.

The High Commissioner arranged for the Ministry to prepare a programme which included:

- A visit to Iwokrama Rainforest Centre
- Visits to some British and World Bank Projects
- Meeting with the Acting President (since the President was in New York attending the 54th Session of the UN General Assembly).

CARICOM Ministers/Ambassadors Meeting

The High Commissioner attended the above-mentioned meeting on February 4 at the Jamaica High Commission. The Meeting hosted by Sir Shridath Ramphal, CARICOM's Chief Negotiator, was a preparatory meeting of CARIFORUM Ministers travelling on to Dakar for the ACP and the EU-ACP Ministerial meetings. The gathering discussed in detail, the agendas for both meetings.

Appointment of President Bharrat Jagdeo

On receipt of the News Bulletin from Guyana Information Service informing that HE Bharrat Jagdeo was sworn in as Guyana's seventh President following the resignation of Mrs Janet Jagan, the Mission prepared a press release which was circulated to all Caribbean High Commissioners, selected Commonwealth High Commissioners, the Commonwealth Secretariat, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Members of Parliament, all the Guyanese organisations, businessmen, and all the individuals on the Mission's mailing list.

President Jagdeo's inaugural speech and his address to the nation were also circulated.

The President's Visit

While in London the President met with His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales on 10th November and the Rt. Hon. Clare Short, Secretary of State for International Development on 11th.

The High Commissioner prepared Speaking points for the President's meeting in London.

The High Commission hosted a reception on 16th November in honour of President Jagdeo. The President was able to meet with a wide cross section of the Guyanese community in the United Kingdom and to have dialogue with them regarding his plans for the development of Guyana. Persons invited included representatives from the House of Lords, House of Commons, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Commonwealth Secretariat, Guyanese organisations, Guyanese businessmen, British nationals and individuals from the Guyanese community.

Visit to London of the Hon. Gail Teixeira, Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports and HE Bharrat Jagdeo as Minister of Finance

The Hon. Gail Teixeira, Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports and the Hon. Bharrat

Jagdeo, Minister of Finance visited London during the reporting period after attending the 35th Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) in Paris.

While in London the High Commissioner set up a number of appointments as requested by Minister Teixeira and accompanied her to all the engagements. A copy of the programme prepared for the Hon. Minister was forwarded to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 15th March.

The High Commissioner took the opportunity while Minister Teixeira and HE. Bharrat Jagdeo were intransit in London to organise a meeting at the High Commission to update members of the Guyanese community on the situation in Guyana. The meeting at the High Commission was held on Tuesday, March 16.

The High Commissioner chaired the Session. The meeting was very well attended and there was active participation in the form of questions from members of the audience.

The discussions included, inter alia, the current dialogue between the PPP/Civic and the PNC and the Constitutional Review Commission.

The High Commission also set up a number of appointments as requested by Minister Teixeira. A copy of the Hon. Minister's programme was forwarded to the Ministry.

Former President Mrs Janet Jagan's Unofficial Visit to London

Former President Her Excellency Janet Jagan paid an unofficial visit to London from 4-10 May.

The High Commission hosted a reception in honour of the President on Saturday, May 8, at the High Commission. It was the first opportunity the President had of meeting with Guyanese nationals in London.

In her address to the gathering the President lauded the worthwhile support of the 42

Guyanese-based organisations and individuals in helping to rebuild Guyana. Alluding to the theme for the event, "Lets work together in an atmosphere of calm and co-operation", the President emphasised the need for all Guyanese at home and overseas to work together in a spirit of co-operation in order to build a nation which they can all be proud of.

Following her address, President Jagan spent three hours meeting and speaking with Guyanese nationals. She promised a future visit during the year.

Profile of President Janet Jagan

The High Commissioner was influential in facilitating the publication of a profile of Her Excellency President Janet Jagan in the spring 1999 Caribbean World Magazine.

The article entitled "A Woman of Substance", addressed the life, work and achievements of the President and her plans to rebuild Guyana.

During the reporting period other Senior Government officials who visited Guyana included the Speaker of the National Assembly, Minister Sheik Baksh, Mr. Dev Anand Sharma, Senior Executive Officer of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Mr. Joseph Headley, Senior Lecturer of the Consultative Association of Guyanese Industry (CAGI) and Deputy Training Officer of the Office of the President, Public Service Management.

Circulation of Press Release

On 22 November the Mission issued a press release on the recent appointments of Ministers and Permanent Secretaries.

Meeting with Mr. Richard Street, Chief Executive of the Prince's Trust

The High Commissioner met with Mr. Richard Street, Chief Executive of the Prince's Trust at the High Commission on 19 November.

ACP London/Brussels Sugar Expert Group Meeting, 6-7 April

Ms. Herbert, First Secretary attached to the High Commission represented the Brussels Mission at the ACP London Group/Brussels Sugar Expert Group Meeting hosted by the London Commercial Group, Tate & Lyle Sugars (LS) at their Headquarters on 7th April.

The meeting focused on preparations for the Sixth Ministerial Conference on Sugar held in Swaziland from 13 to 17 September; the intra-ACP cooperation workshop; transport costs of sugar exports and other related issues.

A report on the meeting was faxed to the Ministry.

Attendance and Participation at the Bethlehem 2000 International Conference held in Rome from 18-19 February 1999

The High Commissioner represented the Government of Guyana at the above-mentioned Conference held in Rome from 18 to 19 February 1999.

A copy of the High Commissioner's Report was faxed to the Ministry on 1st March 1999.

The Circle of Friends (UK) for the promotion of the New Global Human Order held its meeting on debt relief on 23 May, at the High Commission.

Mr. Adrian Lovett, Deputy Director, Jubilee 2000 Coalition spoke on the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative.

The Meeting was chaired by the High Commissioner.

A copy of the press release emanating from the discussions of the meeting issued on 27 May was forwarded to the Ministry, the news media and other pertinent persons.

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NGHO Meeting - 16 July

At a meeting held by the Circle of Friends on 16th July, the members agreed that the Group should organise a series of informal meetings and provide information on the following urgent issues facing the Caribbean in general and Guyana in particular:

- The Sugar Protocol (now subject to WTO and EEC review).
- Export of rum to Britain and the European Union (from the year 2000) it will be subject to free market forces.
- Access of rice to European markets and access of fishery products to the European Union.
- The position of the British Government in linking Developmental aid with capital punishment. This was to be examined and reviewed.
- The possibility of giving support to the Regional Negotiating Machinery in connection with EU-ACP negotiations and to sensitise MPs, trade unions and organisations about the difficulties in accessing export markets to the European Union.

It was also decided that the Group should consist of between 15 to 20 persons who will meet at the Guyana High Commission and the discussion topics should relate to the New Global Human Order (NGHO). The first issue to be lobbied on was sugar.

It was further agreed that the NGHO should be promoted as an alternative to the present trend of globalization.

NGHO Meet - 27 September

Another meeting of the Circle of Friends for the Promotion of a New Global Human Order was held on 27th September.

Presentations were made by David Clark, the EU Sugar Expert of Crarnikow Sugar Limited and Mr Alan Foster, Chairman of Bookers Sugar Company Limited on "Guyana's Sugar in the EU".

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Invitees to this session included all the Members and Friends of the Circle of Friends for the Promotion of a New Global Human Order, Caribbean High Commissioners, selective Members of Parliament, Guyanese organisations, business and selective individuals.

NGHO Meeting - 5 October

An in-house meeting was held for members only on October 5. The meeting discussed the following matters:

1. EU-ACP Negotiations
2. The Modernisation of the Sugar Industry in Guyana
3. Future activities of the Circle of Friends

NGHO Meeting - 17 December

At a meeting of the Circle of Friends held on 17 December the following matters were discussed:

1. World Trade Organisation talks in Seattle
- A nightmare or a prelude to a new dawn.
2. EU/ACP Negotiations
- Update by High Commissioner His Excellency Mr. Laleshwar Singh.
3. Debt Relief and Market Access
- Reflection on Mr Michael Camdessus' address at the WTO meeting in Seattle.

A detailed report of that meeting had been forwarded to the Ministry on 14 April.

Michelle Smith Appeal Fund

Michelle Smith, a sixteen-year old Guyanese girl who has been diagnosed with a grade IV cancer of the shoulder and in urgent need of attention arrived in London on May 17. Michelle's grandmother who resides in London made an appeal for assistance to the High

Commission since treatment was not available in Guyana and that which was administered to her in Trinidad was unsuccessful.

The Mission facilitated contact with concerned individuals and an appeal committee was formed to assist in raising funds to finance her treatment in the United Kingdom. The Committee managed to obtain the services of a consultant who was prepared to provide an assessment of Michelle's condition and to begin a course of combined chemotherapy and radiotherapy at an approximate cost of 16,000.00.

The Association of Guyanese Nurses and Allied Professionals (AGNAP) indicated its intention to organise a number of fundraising events and other Guyanese organisations and individuals examined ways by which they could assist.

The Michelle Smith Appeal Committee set up the Michelle Smith Appeal Fund at Nat West Bank.

The Mission performs all the accounting transactions with the exception of the issuing of cheques which is undertaken by the authorised signatories on the committee.

The committee aims to establish a permanent fund to assist other Guyanese who are in need of medical treatment overseas.

33rd Independence Anniversary Celebrations

The Guyana High Commission, in preparation for Guyana's Thirty-third Anniversary Celebrations facilitated the establishment of an organising committee which consisted of a number of Guyanese organisations, to plan the following events which were held under the patronage of the High Commissioner: Senior Citizens Party, Independence Anniversary Dance and Family Fun Day:

Evensong

To mark the 29th Anniversary of the Republic of Guyana, a special Evensong was held

at Westminster Abbey on Tuesday 2nd March. The Guyanese community in Britain joined the staff of the Mission for the event that was well attended.

Reception held in honour of UG's 35th Anniversary

The Guyana High Commission and the University of Guyana Support Group in the United Kingdom hosted a reception at the High Commission on Friday March 26, to mark the 35th Anniversary of the University of Guyana.

Because of the very busy schedule of the High Commissioner the reception which was formerly planned to coincide with the 35th Anniversary of the University in 1998 had to be postponed to the above date.

In attendance were the Hon. Moses Nagamootoo who was in London after attending the IPDC Meeting at UNESCO in Paris, Guyanese academics, selected invitees and representatives from several Guyanese based organisations in London.

The meeting was well attended. The High Commissioner give a brief history of the University of Guyana which was followed by the Chairman of the Group Mr. Assanah's presentation on the role and function of the UG Support Group. This was followed by an address by The Hon. Moses Nagamootoo on educational standards in Guyana and plans for the future. Minister Nagamootoo ending by thanking the UGSG for their continued support towards the development of education in Guyana. The programme for the evening ended with the recital of poetry by Guyanese poet John Agard.

Donations

Civil Defence Commission

On 12th February, a cheque for the sum of eighty-one pounds and sixty pence (81.60) payable to the Civil Defence Commission was forwarded to the Ministry for onward transmission to the Civil Defence Commission. The sum represented a late donation towards the Drought Relief.

Donation of Butterflies and Chests

Dr. P F Acres donated a quantity of butterflies of various species, which his father a medical doctor who was employed by Bookers in Guyana during the 1960's had collected over a period of time. The chests containing the butterflies, which were made out of wood from Guyana, was also donated.

The High Commission is in the process of arranging for the chests containing the butterflies to be shipped to Guyana.

The Abner Lodge #81

The High Commissioner attended and delivered an address on the topic "Challenges facing the Caribbean in the year 2000" at the 18th Anniversary Dinner and Dance of the Abner Lodge #81.

He received one hundred pounds (100.00) from the officers, members and supporters of the Lodge on behalf of the Beacon Foundation.

Golden Grove/Nabaclis (UK) Association

The Golden Grove/Nabaclis (UK) Association donated two hundred pounds (200.00) towards the Michelle Smith Appeal Fund.

During the reporting period the Mission organised for the following donations to be sent to Guyana by the Guyana Friends Association:

Quantity	Items	Consignee
3 boxes	Book	Plaisance Primary School
8 boxes	Books and Clothes	Friends of the Needy C/o Mrs Barbara Fries

The Association of Guyanese Nurses and Allied Professionals assisted the Mission in sending the following items to their consignees in Guyana:

Quantity	Items	Consignee
Four 1 box	black cabs books	Ministry of Health Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education
1 box	books	The Headmaster, Phillipi Primary School, Phillipi, Corentyne
4 boxes	books	The Chief Librarian, National Library
1 box	books	The Headmistress, Grove Primary School
14 boxes	braille books	The Chief Librarian, National Library
1 box	clothing	The Hon. Vibert De Souza M.P., Ministry of Amerindian Affairs
4 boxes	Medical Supplies	Mrs Sumintra Singh
1 boxes	clothing	Mr. Phillip Edwards St Francis de Sales Kamarang, Upper Mazaruni
1 box	Medical Supplies	The Hon. Dr. Henrey Jeffrey M.P., Minister of Health
one	Walking Fame	The Hon. Dr. Henrey Jeffrey MP Minister of Health

1 box	cricketing gear	Mr. Neil Kumar National Sports Development Council
3 boxes	clothing	Friends of the Needy c/o Dr. Barbara Jagan-Fries

The Mission also arranged for 7 boxes of books donated to the University of Guyana by Dr. Chris Heward of the University of Warwick to be sent by the University of Guyana Support Group of London by ship for the University of Guyana.

Assistance to Ms. Cheryl Foster

Vice-Principal, Cyril Potter College of Education Ms. Cheryl Foster, Vice-Principal of the Cyril Potter College of Education was selected to participate in the 19 Annual Seminar for the International Society for Teacher Education held at the University of Kent from 10 - 17 April.

The College was only able to withstand the cost for the airfare for the Vice-Principal. Assistant Manager of the Seminar, Guyanese Dr. Lionel McCalman of the University of East London sought the assistance of this High Commission in raising the necessary funds totaling 598.00 pounds (248.00 for registration and 350.00 for accommodation).

The Mission wrote to the Guyanese organisations requesting financial assistance to meet the registration and accommodation costs. The World Union of Guyanese donated the registration fee while the Guyana Charity Ball and Guyana Friends Association met the cost for accommodation.

The Eden Project

The Eden Project is a non-profit making Trust honouring the international Convention on Bio diversity. It had an approved Initial budget of 10,000 to visit Guyana in September

(two Eden Staff) and to make direct connections with key Guyanese government bodies (Environment Department, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry Development etc.); research/conservation projects (Iwokrama) and Biodiversity projects (Botanic Gardens, Environmental Protection Agency, etc); and the British High Commission.

Included in the Eden Project's budget is a 4,000 grant to assist a Guyanese student from the University of Guyana to undertake a one-year research project in London on a non-timber forest products which commenced on 1st September.

Following a meeting with an official of the Eden Project the High Commission was influential in expediting a visit to Guyana, which was reported to be successful and fruitful. This project, which is in partnership with the European Union, aims to exhibit the interaction of human with nature. The Mission was able to facilitate the project with contact points in Guyana. The request from Gynheleek Productions for permission to film the project's activities, was communicated to the Ministry by the Mission.

The Mission also communicated with the Ministry of Education regarding the project's proposal to establish a school linking visit programme for the period 1999/2000 with a British school and the Kurupukari Village Primary School. The school will benefit from books, stationery and other materials.

The High Commission continues to be conduit through which the Eden project relates regarding its proposed programme and activities in Guyana. One of the objectives of the project is to establish Guyana's plant world and if possible, to secure some plant material or products for show casing at Eden.

General

Re-establishment of Honorary Consulate of Ireland in Georgetown

The Mission forwarded to the Ministry a Note from the Embassy of Ireland requesting assistance regarding the re-establishment of an Honorary Consulate of Ireland in Georgetown and the appointment as its head, Dr. Deen Sharma, a Guyanese national as Honorary Con-

sul with jurisdiction throughout Guyana.

The documents, including Dr Sharma's curriculum vitae, were forwarded to the Ministry by facsimile transmission on 28 October.

Publications on Guyana

The Mission acquired a number of publications on Guyana as requested by the Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs during the reporting period.

Newsletter

The High Commission continued to publish its newsletter that was circulated within the community in Britain, France, the Netherlands and the Russian Federation. The newsletter's popularity increase the demand with each issue.

International Social Services Fair

The High Commission participated in the annual International Social Services (ISS) Spring Fair held on May 11 and 12 at the Kensington Town Hall. The Guyana stall boasted local Guyanese produce, including its rum and crafts. A donation of 275.00 was subsequently made to the ISS, a charitable organisation aimed at helping people whose personal and social problems are aggravated by the effects of migration.

Guyanese United Associations

The High Commission continues to play a major role in the functions of the Guyanese United Associations, (formerly known as the Independence Organising Committee) which was established to promote Guyana and to organise fund raising events to give support to projects of national significance. The Mission presided over the formulation and completion of a Constitution, which was ratified on 3 November.

2005

Following ratification, a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Organising Secretary and Assistant Organising Secretary were elected.

Message of Sympathy

The Mission sent a letter of sympathy on behalf of the Government and people of Guyana to the relatives of the late Michael Caine, former Chairman of Bookers plc who died on Saturday 20 March.

Memorial Service

The High Commissioner attended the Memorial Service for the late Vere C Bird, former Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda at the Salvation Army Headquarters, Regent's Hall on 19 October.

Administration

During the reporting period the Registry was moved from the fourth floor to the basement and an inventory of the Mission was prepared and forwarded to the Mission.

Mr.Orin Alexander's Termination of Posting to the UK

Mr. Alexander, Secondary Secretary at the High Commission was recalled to Georgetown, effective on July 31st. The Mission has informed the Ministry of the need for an urgent replacement.

Staff Meetings

During the reporting period the High Commissioner held a meeting with the staff to discuss health and safety.

In order to be more efficient in disseminating information when requested from the Mission new system were introduced. The High Commissioner held meetings with members of the diplomatic as well as the local staff to explain the new system and solicit their views.

Second Motor Vehicle for the High Commission

The High Commission has been without a second motor vehicle since November 25 1998. This situation has caused tremendous inconvenience and has severely impeded the work of the Mission. This was communicated to the Ministry.

Office Supplies

Funds from fund raising activities held throughout the year were used to commence refurbishment of the Registry now situated on the fourth floor; redecorate the library and other sections of the Mission and purchase the following office equipment:

- Computer and printer
- Grinding Fax Machine
- Display rack for magazines in the reception area
- New telephone system
- Three typist chairs

Closure of the Embassy of Jamaica in Moscow

The High Commission informed the Ministry of the closure of the Embassy of Jamaica in Moscow which was managing the affairs of Guyanese students in Moscow following the closure of the Guyana Consulate.

Since there was no response from the Ministry the Embassy of Jamaica despatched to the Mission files, documents and other articles which were the property of the Guyana Consulate.

Visit of Mr. Thomas Nestor, Assistant Auditor General of the Auditor General's Department, Guyana

Mr Thomas Nestor, Assistant Auditor General conducted an Audit at the High Commission during the month of May.

The Assistant Auditor General's Report was forwarded to the Ministry along with the Mission's response to the report

CONSULAR SECTION

The following revenue was collected for 1999:-

MONTH	AMOUNT COLLECTED
January	1245.39
February	1990.86
March	1968.64
April	2023.98
May	1523.83
June	1776.87
July	1738.83
August	1880.26
September	1548.63
October	1672.42
November	1692.42
December	979.52
Total	20,091.95

MAIN REVENUE EARNERS

New Passports	8,477.00
Renewals	4,823.00
Shipping Documents	1,525.00
Total	14,795.00

In response to oral and written enquiries the Consular Section is required to give information to Guyanese and others on a wide range of issues, including settlement in Guyana (remigration), property in Guyana, visas, Police Clearance Certificates, Certificates of Non-Impediment to marriage, citizenship of Guyana, whereabouts of relatives, birth, marriage and death certificates, shipment of human remains, tourism related matters, etc.

In many cases, especially those involving legal advice, the Mission is only able to indicate the sources from which such information could be obtained.

Every effort is made to be helpful and courteous to persons wishing to discuss these matters, especially in the case of elderly Guyanese who are worried about their property in Guyana.

Requests have been made for assistance in obtaining visas for Guyanese officials and others on arrival in the UK. These requests have proven to be very difficult to fulfil since most European consulates emphasise that such visas be obtained from relevant Embassies/Consulates in or nearest to Guyana and they are reluctant to issue them in London.

Military and Naval Cadets

The Mission is responsible for obtaining visas for Guyanese military and naval cadets when they are required to travel abroad as part of their training.

The Mission had previously indicated that it would be of assistance if the UK entry visas obtained for them in Guyana could be "Multiple Entry" visas as there is often a problem with their re-entry into the UK after training visits abroad.

Prisoners

Four cases of arrests of Guyanese have been officially reported by the Police.

There have been no official reports to the High Commission of arrests for possession or importation of narcotics.

However, we have ascertained that a Guyanese citizen, who resides with her husband in Barbados, was arrested on arrival in the UK for the importation of drugs. This information was obtained following a request from her husband for assistance in tracing he whereabouts, since he had no communication from her after she left Barbados for a visit to the UK.

There are a number of Guyanese prisoners serving sentences in France, after having been convicted of serious crimes in French Guiana (Cayenne). The Mission is required to issue Travel Documents to enable them to return to Guyana after their release from prison, following verification by the immigration authorities in Guyana of their Guyanese citizenship and personal details.

The Netherlands Police have also requested the issue of Travel Documents for prisoners claiming to be Guyanese who are illegally in The Netherlands.

Caribbean Nationals refused entry into UK

The UK immigration authorities continue to send this High Commission monthly figures for Guyanese, Barbadian, Jamaican and Trinidad & Tobago Nationals refused entry at the three main airports.

The total figures for 1999 are as follows:-

Barbados	4
Guyana	14
Jamaica	2,526
Trinidad & Tobago	79

Deaths of Guyanese

Mr. Osman Hayes - The Metropolitan Police informed the Mission of Mr. Osman Hayes, a Guyanese, who was found in a collapsed condition in the street on the night of 16th October and taken to Brixton Police Station. According to the Police, Mr. Haynes appeared to be under the influence of alcohol and following a series of events was taken to the police

station and placed in a cell. He was later transferred to hospital in an unconscious state and was put on a life support. The High Commission was kept abreast of Mr. Hayes' condition on a regular basis. Following his death on 19 October a representative of the High Commission was invited to the Brixton Police Station to meet with other police officials to be briefed on the matter and about the investigations being carried out. There is to be an inquest into Mr. Hayes' death.

Mr. Lloyd Chester Garfield DODSON - The Staffordshire Police reported the death of Mr. Lloyd Chester Garfield Dodson who died under suspicious circumstances, following the discovery of his body in Staffordshire on 30th September.

The police are pursuing a vigorous enquiry into the circumstance of his death as they suspect that it may be drug related and have sought the Mission's assistance in obtaining information from the Guyana Police regarding previous convictions, any known associates, bank accounts and property held in Guyana.

ACCOUNTS SECTION

The Accounts Section fared better in 1999 than in 1998 despite a number of setbacks beginning early in the year when new source documents were introduced retroactively and some time was lost in the reconstruction of payment and receipt of vouchers.

This section also experienced staff changes in July when the former Clerical Assistant Mr Robert Cookman resigned and was replaced by Mr Sebastian Crabas who was a 'fresh-man' to accounts.

The issue of late receipt of remittances continued to be a problem in 1999 together with the late receipt of exchange rates at which the remittances were sent. This affected the timely completion of payments and receipts vouchers which have to reflect the Guyana dollar equivalent of payments and receipts.

The above relates directly to the issue of meeting payments on time.

The Auditor General's Office carried out an audit inspection early in the year. The Mission's comments and observations on the Auditors's Report were submitted to Head-Office. The issue of concern here was primarily centred on administrative matters. Foreign Service Officers posted to Missions are not trained in these areas but are expected to performed in the capacity of Administrative Officer and are generally unable to function efficiently and effectively.

It is recommended that staff identified for the performance of administrative duties be given some "in-house" training before being posted to Missions. This would result in great improvement in the handling of personnel issues and other related matters that affect staff at Missions.

The following can be reported on the 1999 accounts:-

- The Sub-account's and Collectors Cash-books was written-up and balanced to the end of December 1999.
- The Votes Ledger was written up and balanced to the end of December 1999.
- Revenue collected for the period January - November, 1999 was remitted to the Accountant General's Department. Revenue collected for December is being sent by Draft via the next diplomatic bag due to be despatched on Friday 21 January.
- All bank accounts were reconciled to the end of December 1999.

Mention must be made of the issue of outstanding advances authorised by Head Office. Refunds have not been forthcoming on a timely basis and in some instances are too long overdue. This has put stress on the Mission's finances. It would be greatly appreciated if these outstanding amounts are refunded early in the new year.

The Accounts Section continued to assist with the financial management of the Michelle Smith Appeal Fund which was set-up to raise funds to pay for cancer treatment in the UK.

To summarise the performance of the Accounts Section in 1999, it would only be fair to say that it did well in accomplishing it objectives.

NEW YORK GUYANA PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

As its work programme for the year indicated, the Mission did not only have obligations relating to the United Nations agenda, but a large proportion of its work was directed towards coordinating and spearheading the activities of the Group of 77. Moreover, this year, there were additional responsibilities undertaken by the Mission, in terms of the following:

- Guyana commenced its 3 – year term on the Executive Board of the United Nations Children’s Fund on January 1, 1999.
- The Fifth Committee held resumed sessions in March and May to discuss outstanding issues of the 53rd Session including the peace-keeping budget, gratis personnel, performance reports, the development account and the scale of assessment.
- Guyana assumed the Chairmanship of the Latin American and Caribbean Group of the United Nations in February.
- Coordination of the CARICOM position on reform and restructuring of the Security Council.
- The Third Session of the Preparatory Committee for the Review Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons - –April 12 to 23.
- The Annual sessions of the Disarmament Commission, the Committee on Information and the Charter Committee – April and May.
- Meeting of the States Parties to the UN Convention of the Law of the Sea-May 19 to 28.
- Meeting of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.
- Meetings of the Joint Coordinating Committee of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77.
- Meeting of the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

OVERVIEW

Individual reports have already been submitted to the Ministry, highlighting the outcomes of meetings held during the course of the year and the substantive issues on the agenda of the Group of 77. This year, the Group played an important role in negotiations relating to the following:

- Preparations for the Conference on Financing for Development.
- The Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development.
- Economic and Social Council including its Substantive session in July.
- Review of the International Conference on Population and Development.
- Environment and Human Settlements.
- Review of the World Summit for Social Development.
- Review of the World Conference for the Advancement of Women.
- South Summit
- Millennium Assembly.

On January 12th, Guyana formally assumed the Chairmanship of the Group when the Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Clement Rohee attended the handover ceremony and made a presentation, outlining the work programme for this year and Guyana's plans for implementing it.

During the course of the year, there was further ministerial representation by Guyana at the one-day dialogue between ECOSOC and BWIs on April 29th (Minister of Finance), the Ministerial segment of ECOSOC in July as well as the Review of the International Conference on Population and Development at the end of June (Minister for Human Services and Social Security). Advisers of H.E. the President of Guyana on Environment as well as Public Policy and Planning also formed part of Guyana's delegation at the CSD-7 Session and the Sessions of the Executive Board of UNICEF respectively.

In September, H.E. the President of Guyana delivered statements to the Plenary of the General Assembly as well as the Special Session of the General Assembly to review and

appraise implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

The Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs participated in Ministerial Meetings of the Group of 77 as well as of the Non-Aligned Movement, COFCOR (Caribbean Foreign Minister) and that held by the United States Secretary of State which also took place in September. In addition, the Minister held bilaterals with counterparts present in New York for the General Debate of the Assembly. One such meeting was with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Venezuela on the Guyana/Venezuela border controversy.

HIGHLIGHTS OF MAJOR MEETINGS OF 1999

An event of particular importance and interest to the G-77 was the High Level Meeting for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC) which took place in New York. In recognition of the direct and valuable support which the Chairmanship receives from UNDP's Special Unit for TCDC, Guyana strongly defended the Unit's independent and strengthened existence from constant insinuations calling for its abolition and absorption by UNDP.

At the same time, preparations within the G-77 for the high-level meeting on Financing for Development continued as the meeting slowly received the support of the developed countries. With the continuing decline of ODA, the persistence of debt and the projection of costly conflicts, the United Nations is challenged to find resources for development.

The outcome of the Special Session of the General Assembly to review the International Conference on Population and Development, was subject to intense negotiations between the G-77 and developed partners. Even within the G-77, attempts were made by some parties to reopen agreements reached in Cairo in order to assert their position on issues such as abortion. The active involvement of non-governmental organizations in the process was an added element facing negotiating partners. At the last hour, however, after protracted negotiations within the Group and then with developed partners, a final text was settled to the relief, if not satisfaction, of all concerned.

In terms of the environment, the main events that required intensive preparation and negotiations were the CSD-7 Session, the Extraordinary Meeting of the Conference of Par-

ties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (Cartagena), the Third Session of the Ad Hoc Open-Ended Inter-governmental Session on Forests (Geneva), and the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (Bonn).

Growing recognition of the need to complement efforts for economic development with initiatives for social development has led to increased emphasis being placed on preparations for the review Conferences in 2000 of the World Summit for Social Development and the International Conference for the Advancement of Women. This year, in addition to the Regular Sessions of the Commission for Social Development as well as the Commission on the Status of Women, there were additional meetings and intersessionals held by the preparatory committees to ensure that the outcome documents of the Special Sessions could be agreed upon in good time.

With respect to administration, finance and administrative issues, the US indebtedness remains a serious problem for the United Nations Organization, since resources now available are inadequate to the requirements of its mandates. Many of these relate to Peace Keeping Operations which, because of ad hoc financing, are continuously in danger of collapse. A major area of interest for the Group of 77 has been the Development Account established on the presumption that savings on administrative costs could be applied to development purposes.

A primary task for Guyana's chairmanship were preparations for the South Summit. Indeed Guyana's responsibilities will extend beyond the expiration of its office in January, since as Chairman of the Preparatory Committee, Guyana will be in charge of the process until the Summit is held in Havana, Cuba from April 10-14, 2000. Thus far, two substantive sessions have been organized to deal with both organizational issues and the substantive agenda. In December, a High-Level Meeting in Georgetown also produced discussion papers for consideration by participants of the Summit.

In terms of the Millennium Assembly and Summit, Guyana has worked closely with the Non-Aligned Movement to formulate common positions within the overall Working Group led by the President of the General Assembly. Although general agreement has now been reached on the overarching theme. "The United Nations in the Twenty-first Century," some aspects such as the format remain to be settled.

Apart from presiding over meetings, speaking and negotiating on behalf of the Group of 77, as well as participating in briefings for NGOs, the Chairman was called upon to represent the Group at various fora. Hereunder are some highlights of these activities.

Meeting of Inter-American Economists on Globalization, Havana, Cuba, January 18-21, 1999.

Meeting on Globalization – a Strategic Response from the South UWI Jamaica, February 1-3, 1999.

Meeting of G-77 Chapters – Geneva, April 6-9, 1999.

Council on Foreign Relations/Friedrich Egbert Stiftung Foundation on Debt Issues – April 30, 1999.

ECOSOC Meeting with the Bretton Wood Institutions, Washington D.C. – June 02.

Stanley Foundation Meeting in Dublin, Ireland, from June 14-19, The Role of the United Nations in the 21st Century.

Briefings on the Work of the G-77 – Forum of Small States.

Lecture at Seton Hall University: School of Diplomacy and International Relations – April 29.

ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS:

On May 19th, Guyana established diplomatic relations with the Sovereign Military Order of Malta with the signing of Joint Communiques by the Permanent Representatives of the two countries.

On August 27, similar relations were established with Indonesia.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

First, it should be said that no report, however comprehensive, can adequately convey the overwhelming demands placed on Guyana by the Chairmanship of the Group. Unlike most other years, 1999 can be deemed especially arduous and difficult because of the reviews of some of the major United Nations Summit Conferences held this year and the undertaking of new processes such as the Financing for Development, the ECOSOC Sessions, the preparations for the South Summit and the Millennium Assembly- and the host of other routine and incidental responsibilities that is the stock of UN business.

It was certainly no easy task as Chairman of the Group of 77, to continuously forge common positions from the often discordant views of the 135 Member countries of the Group, on a very wide agenda of issues. Invariably, the Chair was caught between the hard-line stance of the more powerful members of the Group and the interests of weaker ones who are often not even there to speak for themselves. Nonetheless, it is truly astonishing that in the end, a fair degree of consensus does emerge, mainly on fundamental principles and broad areas of interest. Of course, our labours were doubled when after squeezing this limited consensus, we were then obliged to go into negotiations with our developed partners who were not only more cohesive but, invariably, technically better prepared.

Despite these constraints, however, it is fair to say that our delegation has acquitted itself with success. This is not merely a personal assessment but one that was shared by impartial observers. Some of these were patently surprised that despite our small number, we are still able to satisfy our many obligations. Of course, little do they know at what human cost-the reality was that if any one of the officers had fallen ill, the whole machinery may have come to a halt. The possibility was not far-fetched, since on many occasions some officers toil until 2-4 in the mornings. During the General Assembly, the fifth committee representative negotiated for 72 hours. Such sacrifice should be suitably rewarded and some past Chairmen have been known to offer their staff some form of compensation.

Our performance has also been greatly assisted by UNDP/TCDC's financial support, allowing us to have the services of two consultants – Professors Benn and Thomas, and to

organize two major symposia – one in New York during October and the other in Georgetown, the following month. Additionally, an amount was provided to cater for some travel obligations. The Permanent Mission is currently negotiating with the Policy/Governance Division of UNDP for some extra funding to arrange a few round-tables in preparation for the South Summit. All in all, Guyana can consider itself very fortunate in having this generous endorsement of its efforts.

Looking ahead to the year 2000, given Guyana's leadership role in preparations for substantive review conferences to be held in the new year, there are already calls for us to continue to be actively involved in preparations whether as facilitators or as a member of the bureaus of the preparatory committees. The Work Programme of the Permanent Mission for 2000, however, will provide a clearer picture of the level and scope of responsibility expected to be borne by the Office.

2719

OTTAWA

GUYANA HIGH COMMISSION

GENERAL OVERVIEW

Mission

The highlights of the Mission's activities for 1999 included the arrival in July and accreditation in September of the new High Commissioner, HE Rajnarine Singh; the visit to Ottawa in late September of Mrs. Yvonne Hinds, wife of Prime Minister Samuel Hinds, and changes in February in the representational staff of the Mission.

Changes to the representational staff occurred in February with the arrival of Mrs. Paulette Comette, Senior Foreign Service Officer 1 as replacement for Mrs. Jennifer Tiwari, Senior Foreign Service Officer 1, Acting High Commissioner, who departed for Caracas later that month. Upon the departure of Mrs. Tiwari the duties of Acting High Commissioner were performed by Mrs. Comette until the arrival in July of the new High Commissioner.

Despite these changes and the absence of a High Commissioner for the earlier half of the year, the High Commission did however, successfully discharge its responsibilities for the year under review. The arrival of the new High Commissioner contributed significantly in this regard.

Once the High Commissioner assumed duty on July 20, the ensuing months of August and September were spent meeting Canadian Government officials from key departments such as the Departments of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), and the Ministry of Transport. Meetings were also held with the Secretary of State for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Speaker of the House of Parliament. The opportunity was taken on all these occasions to provide an update on the political and economic situation in Guyana, as well as on Guyana's investment climate.

The discussions with CIDA focused on existing CIDA programmes in Guyana particularly those that were nearing completion. Among other things the agency was urged to con-

sider new programmes for Guyana, possibly in the Fisheries sub-sector. The question of additional funding was also discussed with no clear commitment in this regard from the Canadians.

Changes to the leadership of the Canadian International Development Agency occurred in October when Dr. Leonard Good was appointed President of that Agency. Dr. Good replaced Mrs. Hugette LaBelle who retired from the Canadian Public Service in October.

During 1999 the High Commission participated in a number of meetings and seminars on issues of direct importance to Guyana, as well as attended several briefing sessions conducted by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada (DFAIT). These covered areas significant to both Canada and Guyana and included Canada's role in regional trade issues particularly the FTAA process; Canada's proposal to the G-8 on debt reduction; Canada in the Commonwealth, particularly with regard to Pakistan. The question of the secession of Quebec was also monitored by the Mission.

MISSION ACTIVITIES

Agreements with Canada

In keeping with our efforts to conclude the Agreement for the Protection and Promotion of Investment, and Social Security Agreement, the Mission during the second half of 1999 reopened exchanges on the draft text of both agreements with the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, and the Department of Human Resources Development Canada, respectively. Central to these exchanges were revised texts of both agreements as provided by the Ministry. The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade was also asked to propose new dates for the meeting between officials from Guyana and Canada for further discussions on the text of the Investment Treaty.

Trade and Investment

As a follow-up to the September Meeting held between High Commissioner Singh and a group of businessmen while the High Commissioner was in Quebec City for his accreditation, the Group headed by Mr. Clarence Marshall, visited the High Commission in early October to discuss in detail further prospects for investing in Guyana. Discussions focused inter alia on housing, mining, forestry and incinerator building.

As part of our efforts to promote matters relating to Trade and Tourism in Guyana, the High Commissioner throughout the year maintained close contact with the Trade Facilitation Office of Canada (TFOC) through meetings and exchange of information with its representatives. During this period the High Commission began working to have businesses in Guyana profiled in the Infodata of TFOC which is accessible to businesses throughout Canada.

From January - April the High Commission also worked with the New Guyana Marketing Corporation (NGMC) to facilitate the student Consultants who were conducting research on a marketing strategy for Guyana's pineapples in Canada. The project was sponsored by TFOC in collaboration with the University of Ottawa. The final report on this project was presented to the High Commission and the sponsor of the research by the three researchers at a special session convened in April at the University of Ottawa. Copies of this report were forwarded to the New Guyana Marketing Corporation and the Ministry.

In March, the High Commission participated in a seminar on Trade and Tourism which was convened in Ottawa by the Trade Facilitation Office of Canada and in May, the Head of Mission attended the Fifth Annual Conference of Montreal which focussed on trade issues within the hemisphere. Information and material obtained at the Conference and the seminar were forwarded to the Ministry for use as appropriate, and for dissemination to the relevant Ministries/Agencies.

In other areas, information material received from the Ministry and Export Promotion Council on GuyExpo '99 were distributed to individuals and organisations across Canada. Notification regarding the postponement of GuyExpo '99 was also treated in like manner.

Other Mission Activities

The High Commission in late September was happy to welcome to Ottawa Mrs. Yvonne Hinds, wife of Prime Minister Samuel Hinds, who led Guyana's delegation to the Ninth Conference of Spouses, held from September 29 - October 1. Technical support for the delegation was provided by Mrs. Paulette Cornette, who also participated in the Technical Meeting for the Conference which was held in Ottawa in June.

While in Ottawa, Mrs. Hinds also had the opportunity to meet with and address a wide cross section of the Guyanese Community as well as friends of Guyana on some of the social programmes that are in place in Guyana.

In June, the Head of Mission attended the seminar on "The Debt of the Poorest: the Cologne Summit" which was convened by the North South Institute. This seminar was a collaborative effort of the North-South Institute, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), and the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada and was aimed at bringing further clarity to the "Cologne Initiative."

In October High Commissioner Singh along with Mr. Navin Chandarpal, Adviser to the President on Science and Technology and Mr. Doorga Persaud, the General Manger of the Guyana Natural Resources Agency attended the Ministerial Forum on the Kyoto Mechanisms which was held in Ottawa from October 7-9. The Forum was attended by Ministers and/or representatives responsible for Climate Change from thirty-three (33) countries. Guyana's participation in this Forum was in its capacity as President of the G-77. The Forum which focussed on "Preparation for Implementation" was geared to give emphasis to the practical realities associated with mechanisms, particularly with respect to Convention priorities and governance.

Also in the area of the environment the High Commissioner in June participated, as an observer, in the Sixth Meeting of the Inter-American Institute for Global Change research (IAI) held in Ottawa. The main focus of that meeting was the promotion of collaborative research and informed action within the region on the impact of global change.

At the beginning of November the High Commissioner attended the Diplomatic Fo-

rum arranged by the Department of Foreign Affairs for diplomats accredited to Canada which was held in New Foundland and attended by approximately 90% of the Heads of Missions. The programme which lasted from 4-8 November included seminars and workshops sessions, which were addressed by senior Canadian officials. During the course of the seminar the High Commissioner also held discussions on Guyana's Investment climate with a number of private sector businessmen who were also in attendance.

CARICOM

In keeping with the spirit of regional integration, CARICOM Missions represented in Ottawa maintained close collaboration at various levels throughout the year. Regular meetings were held at the level of High Commissioners at which issues of regional importance such as the FTAA, the Summit of the Americas, bananas, immigration and deportation, and protocol matters were discussed. When necessary joint representation was made by the High Commissioners to the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada. One such representation in March focussed on Canada/Cuba relations.

The final meeting of the Group for 1999 was hosted by this High Commission. At that meeting it was decided that Heads of Missions of Haiti, Cuba, and Dominican Republic would be invited to future meetings of the Group.

Administrative Matters

During January and February, and again in July the necessary arrangements to facilitate the movement of Senior Officers to and from the Mission, as well as the arrival of the New High Commissioner were effected in keeping with the Ministry's requirements.

In keeping with capital expenditure released in March, the necessary repairs were completed in June on the walkway and the garage door of the residence.

Subsequent to the release of funds the purchase of a new car for the Head of Mission was effected in December. Earlier in the year, the Mission also purchased and arranged for

the shipment to Cuba of a new car for the Head of our Mission in Havana. Supporting records of these transactions have been forwarded to the Ministry.

Throughout the year regular maintenance was carried out to our office equipment mainly fax machine, photocopier, computers and telephone to ensure that they were in proper working order. Measures were also taken to ensure that computers were Y2k compliant.

In June the auditing of the Missions financial records was conducted by the representative from the Office of the Auditor General. In keeping with the recommendations contained in the auditor's report the Mission has initiated corrective measures in those areas indicated.

The Mission's monthly statements for current expenditure were prepared and submitted to the Ministry throughout the year. In response to the Ministry's requests the draft Estimates of Revenue, Current Expenditure and Capital Expenditure for 2000, as well as the information for the staff list and database were also submitted by the Mission.

At the end of December, the Mission completed and submitted to the Ministry, its Work Programme for 2000. The Work Programme provides an overview of the areas on which the Mission will focus in 2000.

Consular Matters

Throughout 1999 the deportation question remained a top issue in our interaction with Canadian officials working in this area. With a view to establishing acceptable procedures for the handling of deportees, a number of discussions were held with officials from this High Commission and representatives of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, and Citizen and Immigration Canada. The sensitive nature of this matter was brought to the fore in December when Canada chose to transport seven deportees to Guyana without proper documentation. The question of a Memorandum of Understanding as being called for by Canadian officials, remains open for discussion.

The Mission throughout the year remained at the service of the Guyanese Community in Ottawa as well to Guyanese in other Provinces. Our main activities involved renewals and

the issuance of new passports. In addition a limited amount of emergency certificates were issued.

A number of Powers of Attorney, applications for Birth, Marriage, Death and Life Certificates, and Police Certificates of Character were also processed. On a lesser scale, other activities included the issuance of visas and certificates of legislation.

Revenue earned from our various consular activities in 1999 totalled \$C7,306. The full sum has been remitted to Georgetown.

Throughout the year every opportunity was taken in our interaction with the Guyanese community to exchange views on Guyana as well as on other matters of concern to the community. The Mission provided on an ongoing basis information and other material on Guyana to students, other individuals and organisations as these were requested. Copies of the New Global Human Order were included in all such packages.

As was necessary for the effective execution of our duties, regular contact was maintained with our Consulate in Toronto. In December, High Commissioner Singh paid his first Official visit to the Consulate.

PARAMARIBO

EMBASSY OF GUYANA

OVERVIEW

The year under review had witnessed a number of important events that significantly impacted on the political, social and economic fabric of Suriname and raised many questions about the country's future performance. President Wijdenbosch's administration was attacked on several fronts and events, as they unfolded, suggested no immediate solution to the myriad problems which confronted the country.

The ruling coalition, mired by internal dissension, fought consistently against pressure from the combined force of opposition political parties, trade unions and the business community (structured Cooperation). They clamoured for the resignation of President Wijdenbosch. This prompted him to announce elections in May 2000, although they were not constitutionally due until 2001. However, by the end of the year, a semblance of order and calm returned as the campaign for the general elections took shape. Some diplomatic observers had predicted victory for the National Democratic Party (NDP) which had built its campaign on efforts to improve social conditions in Suriname.

The Government's efforts to improve the economy had not met with the desired results as the exchange rate maintained its downward spiral and prices for basic commodities rose concomitantly. Notwithstanding, a significant number of investors showed confidence in the country and established new chains of fast food restaurants and retail outlets but large-scale investments were not forthcoming.

Despite its domestic setbacks, Suriname performed noticeably in the regional, hemispheric and international organisations which evoked a sense of pride within Surinamese society. However, its relations with the Netherlands, the former colonizer, were clouded by the failed attempt by the Dutch to have Desi Bouterse extradited to face trial on drug-related charges.

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Suriname maintained a good relationship with its neighbours, especially Guyana, but the main vehicle for strengthening bilateral ties, the Guyana/Suriname Cooperation Council, failed to meet. However, senior officials met at several conferences which served to deepen and expand economic, social, cultural, scientific and commercial relations.

POLITICAL REVIEW

The advent of the year, the last in the millennium, had witnessed unrest among some sections of the labour movement, especially the civil servants who called a truce over the Christmas Holidays and the month of Ramadan. They resumed their protest actions early in January and took to the streets in noisy demonstrations. After several rounds of negotiations, the teachers accepted a package that included 20% increase in salary and a monthly allowance of thirty thousand guilders for each worker.

The agreement was short-lived and by May, the Structured Cooperation unleashed a series of daily protests through the streets of Paramaribo and Nickerie. Unprecedentedly, large crowds which crossed ethnic lines and estimated at approximately eighty thousand, marched through the capital and converged on government buildings, especially the Office of the President. The protestors also targeted a number of business entities, among which were the premises of Dilip Sardjoe, a leading member of the Basic Party for Renewal and Democracy (BVD).

On June 1, in the absence of President Wijdenbosch, the National Assembly voted on an opposition motion of no-confidence with 27 votes in favour, 14 against requested the President's resignation but was rejected with 28 votes against and 21 in favour. However, the Opposition motion was ineffective as it failed to win support by a two-thirds majority.

It became apparent that the president was not taking instructions, and in an unexpected move President Wijdenbosch dismissed Bouterse as State Advisor, thus paving the way for the Dutch Government to pursue their request for Bouterse's extradition and trial on drug-related offences.

Bouterse kept up his scathing attacks against the Government and used diverse means

to force the President to re-schuffle the Cabinet, all to no avail. During that period, President Wijdenbosch remained silent. But, in December, without consulting the chairmen of the respective parties in the coalition, he reshuffled the cabinet, much to the displeasure of Bouterse. The latter, in his end-of-year address to his party supporters, denigrated Wijdenbosch and announced his candidacy for President in the up-coming elections.

Since the announcement of elections, a number of political parties emerged, many of them were splinter groups from the traditional parties, many of them comprised members who were disillusioned with the manner in which the leaders of the older parties functioned.

The Structured Cooperation, having failed in its endeavour to constitutionally remove the Wijdenbosch-Radhakishun Administration, took alternative actions. They did not return to street demonstrations but re-doubled their efforts in May. Additionally, some of them accepted the President's invitation to discuss solutions to the country's myriad problems.

For his part, the President put the machinery in gear and sought financial and technical assistance from the European Union, the Organisation of American States, the inter-American Development Bank, the United Nations and other donor agencies to effectively and transparently conduct the elections.

Some commitments were from the European Union and the Organisation of American States. By the end of the year, only the National Democratic Party had embarked on its campaign, particularly in the hinterland communities from which it traditionally drew its strength.

In the ensuing period, the Assembly debated a number of important issues and approved the annual Budget and the President's Long Range Development Plan. It also expressed concerns about the contracts signed with the Chinese Consortium for the asphaltting of the roads in Paramaribo but, on several occasions, the Minister of Public Works, Rudolph Mangal, was unable to answer questions which led to allegations of impropriety. Those claims were further compounded by suggestions of corruption on the part of the Minister of Trade and Industry in the disbursement of a US\$18 million loan from the Inter-American Development Bank and misconduct on the part of the Minister of Defence, Dwarka Panday who was accused of misconduct in his dealings with young Amerindian girls in villages along the Corentyne river.

The Assembly also expressed concerns about the intensification of criminal activities had intensified throughout Suriname. To that end, the police special squad was thrown into operation and was subsequently able to stem the tide. Additionally, there was a noticeable increase in the number of drug interdictions at the John Adolf Pengel International Airport where it was discovered that on nearly every flight bound for Holland drugs were intercepted. The most widely-used method was swallowing cocaine balls. However, a significant bust occurred at Schipol Airport in the Netherlands where a shipment of 700 kg of Cocaine was intercepted and a number of persons arrested.

In its quest to improve surveillance in its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), Suriname acquired eight new patrol and two aircraft. They were eventually deployed to Albina, Nickerie, the Coppename River, for ocean-going patrols, whilst some remained in Paramaribo.

ECONOMIC REVIEW

The Wijbenbosch Administration considered a number of new initiatives which included the introduction of a Sales Tax, an Emergency Plan to curb spiralling inflation and the synchronization of the official and black market exchange rates. Additionally, in September, the Government implemented a new system that eradicated trade barriers.

Since 1996, the Surinamese Guilder, previously overvalued, continued its consistent decline and, at one period, was trading at SF2,000 - US\$1. That had a serious effect on the purchasing power of the ordinary Surinamese and raised tariffs on water, electricity and transportation, resulting in debilitating effects on all sectors in the society.

Government subtly bowed to the pressure exerted by the International Monetary Fund and other Multilateral Financial Institutions and raised the official rate so as to minimise the gap with the parallel market but with little success. The General Bureau of Statistics projected an Annual Inflation rate of approximately 50% but figures released by the Central Bank indicated that by year-end, the inflation rate was 104%.

In the production sector the bauxite industry maintained its position as the country's main foreign currency earner despite a number of set-backs. The two companies, Suralco

and Billinton joined forces and threatened the Government to cease transfers of foreign currency if they were paid at the old official rate of SF496 to US\$1. They contended that they paid more for their operations as they were forced to honour all their commitments in foreign currency. However, an agreement was eventually made that satisfied both parties. Production of bauxite was not significantly increased and, in the course of the year, renewed interest was shown in the bauxite deposits in Western Suriname as the present mining areas were expected to be exhausted early in the new millennium. However, prices on the aluminum market plummeted to US\$1,227 per tone. Consequently, Suralco, a subsidiary of the US-based company, ALCOA, closed its smelter on April 22.

This action resulted in the retrenchment of approximately three hundred employees at all levels.

The rice industry again failed to reach its production targets. It was mired by a number of administrative and financial difficulties including the animosity between Desi Bouterse and Badrissen Sital, the dismissal of the Board of Directors at the Rice Institute, serious administrative problems at Wagengen and Nickerie, scarcity of loans from the Banks and non payments by the millers. The Government and the European Union promised an injection of financial aid to improve the production.

The State Oil company, STAATSOLIE, turned in a creditable performance despite a number of setbacks at the administrative level. Production increased to approximately 10,000 barrels a day and plans were made to achieve approximately 20,000 during the ne year. Pivotal to that expansion was an arrangement made with Trinidad and Tobago through which more of Suriname's crude oil would be refined in the twin-island Republic, and from which new markets could be accessed in neighbouring countries. Furthermore, Staatsolie signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Deep Water Consortium, which comprised of Daewoo, National Oil Company, Steel and Burlington for off-shore exploratory drilling along a 152 km2 stretch of Suriname's coast line.

The decline in the fisheries sector continued over the period and did not significantly improve its foreign currency earnings over the previous year. The local company, SAIL, responsible for marketing the product was bedevilled by serious cash-flow problems and had to reduce its work-force. However, it was still possible to satisfy its principal customers in

Japan, South Korea and the United States of America.

The performance of the forestry sector, which was carefully monitored by the environmentalists, did not register significant earning. However, the Government of Suriname took a bold step in making available 1.6 million hectares of pristine forests for the establishment of the Central Suriname Nature Reserve in conjunction with the Global Environment Facility and Conservation International.

Guyana/Suriname

Guyana and Suriname maintained a warm, cordial and good neighbourly relationship during 1999, despite the presence of a number of disruptive incidents that were effectively dealt with through normal diplomatic channels. No state visits were undertaken but bilateral meetings were conducted at several regional, hemispheric and international conferences.

The Guyana/Suriname Cooperation Council, the primary vehicle for steering the course of bilateral relations, failed to function as expected. However, in February, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Errol Snijders, paid a two-day visit to Guyana to discuss pertinent issues with Minister Rohee and to set plans for the convening of the next meeting in Paramaribo. Following the visit, information on the composition of the Working Groups and Agenda items were exchanged but, despite strenuous efforts by Guyana, the Surinamese authorities could not decide on convenient dates for the meeting.

The Border Issue was generally dormant until October when the Surinamese Government expressed its concerns about a statement allegedly made by Guyana at a one-day seminar on borders. The Government urgently summoned Ambassador Arjun who was informed that President Wijbenbosch was requesting a meeting with President Jagdeo during the 7th Special Meeting of Heads of Government of CARICOM in Trinidad and Tobago, to discuss the matter and other important issues of mutual interest.

The Corentyne River also came into sharp focus in October when the Surinamese military authorities arrested three (3) "back-track" boats which were not far from the Guyana side of the river. In the process, several shots were fired and the boats were escorted to

Suriname. The incident prompted an immediate enquiry and the Surinamese Government responded swiftly and explained that it was part of a routine exercise by its forces to combat illegal activities in the Corentyne River. Further enquiries reveal that the captains of the boats made "out-of-court" settlements and their vessels were subsequently released.

Concurrently, smuggling, drug-trafficking, gun-related and other criminal activities were notable during 1999. Unauthorized sale of Guyana's brown sugar continued, despite several attempts to curb the activity and businessmen in the Upper Corentyne district bemoaned the presence of petrol, oil and lubricants which were purchased at lower prices. Of some concern, were reports of stolen boats and engines from the Corentyne which found their way into New Nickerie and on several occasions, the owners identified their property but were unable to uplift them due to complicity between the perpetrators and the police.

Notwithstanding, there was laudable cooperation in several fields between officials from border locations. The most significant was the establishment of a committee to work out the modalities for legalising the "back-track" placing it under central control and guaranteeing the safety of passengers. On the other hand, the MV Canawaima, which provided a valuable service, was slightly affected by the bad conditions of the access road on the Suriname side due to incessant rainfall. Emergency repairs were done and the European Union pledged their support to rehabilitate both access roads.

It was noticeable that the Surinamese authorities had scaled down their operations against our fishermen whose succour depended on their unhindered use of the Corentyne River and surrounding waterways. There was a marked decrease in the number of reported arrests and detention of Guyanese boats. After a long delay, the Surinamese Government presented its comments on the Draft Fisheries Agreement which was reviewed by Guyana.

It was also significant to note there was a marked decline in the reported cases of harassment of Guyanese nationals, due in large measure to the sustained campaign waged by the Embassy in the matter concerning Guyanese national, Colin Jones, who had died in police custody.

The dismal state of Suriname's economy prompted a number of requests by local and foreign investors for information on private investments and joint-venture opportunities in

Guyana. The Embassy provided answers to those queries and guided the interested parties to the relevant agencies and departments for follow-up action.

A series of fruitful exchanges were undertaken at several levels outside of the official ambit. A delegation from the Guyana Medical Association comprised of Doctors Hughley Hanoman, Max Hanoman and Dr. Beckles visited Suriname in October for talks with their counterparts at the Academisch Hospital in Paramaribo. Their deliberations resulted in a cooperation pact that included treatment for Guyanese patients suffering from cancer and heart ailments and post-graduate training for Guyanese doctors. Shortly afterwards, a delegation from Suriname paid a return visit to the Georgetown Hospital and advanced plans for the training of Surinamese medics in Guyana.

The New Guyana Marketing Corporation and the Beharry Group of Companies participated in an Agrarian Fair organised by the Chamber of Commerce in Suriname during April, 1999. Both booths attracted a large patronage and the business entities networked with their counterparts and laid the foundation for more Guyanese products to find a niche market in Suriname.

Several visits were also undertaken at the economic, technical, social, cultural and sporting levels. A group of students from President's College visited Suriname early in the year and, at Easter were followed by a large group from St. Rose's High School who were preparing for the Caribbean Examination Council Examination. They used the opportunity to research aspects of life in Suriname, especially the Bush Negroes, a requirement for the CXC Examinations. Additionally, members from the Ancient Order of Forrester (AOF) attended the 75th Anniversary of the local Chapter. Notwithstanding, the crowning glory of the sporting arena was the defeat of Suriname's under 23 football team, not only in Guyana but also on their match in Suriname, in August.

Consular Functions

The Embassy maintained its consular and notarial services to the best of its ability during the reviewing period. It was estimated that approximately forty-five thousand Guyanese nationals resided in Suriname during 1999. Some worked in the rice and banana districts of

Nickerie, Wageningen and Saramacca, while the largest number was found in Paramaribo, engaged in fishing, construction, trading, domestic and other semi-skilled jobs, among others. The Consular Department, also provided services to our nationals in French Guiana where about eight thousand Guyanese resided, and to Guyanese residing in the islands of the Dutch Antilles.

The most solicited services in demand were new passports, renewal of passports, requests for birth certificates, certificates of character from the Police Force, signing of Affidavits, deed polls and power attorney. Intermittently, the services were sometimes adversely affected by the scarcity of blank passports and revenue stamps which had to be supplied from Georgetown.

A significant number of our nationals who resided in Suriname had not acquired the relevant permission to remain in the country. Notwithstanding, there was a noticeable decline in deportation as well as cases of police harassment. This was probably as a result of a series of close contacts established by the Embassy with the security forces and related departments.

The year under review also witnessed an unusual number of requests for monetary assistance related to the burial of relatives and friends, payment of medical bills and passage for travelling to Guyana when stranded. On a number of occasions staff members made personal contributions as there were no allocations for such requests. However, many nationals became infuriated and openly abusive when advised that the Embassy was not in a position to satisfy their demands.

Consular Visits

Ambassador Arjun paid his first Official visit to the French Department of Guyana (French Guiana) in May. He met a number of local officials and had extensive discussions with Guyanese nationals, providing an update on Guyana's political and economic status. He also fielded-questions on consular services and provided guidance in the treatment of problems related to consular matters and the dire need for an Honorary Consul in Cayenne.

Visit to Nickerie

Ambassador Arjun paid an official visit to Nickerie, accompanied by Mr. Lester Bourne, the Executive Officer (Consular) and translator. He also met with businessmen, farmers and officials of the government, including the Commissaris, the Heads of Customs, Police, Immigration and the Military and discussed matters of interest to our nationals. He also took the opportunity to identify a suitable person to perform the duties of Honorary Consul in Nickerie but with no success.

Staffing

The Embassy was manned by the Ambassador with two First secretaries, Head of Chancery and Consular, respectively, supported by home-based and locally recruited staff. This complement of staff showed had responsibility for a wide spectrum of activities in the realm of political, social, cultural, economic, commercial, administrative and consular affairs controlled by the Ambassador.

Notwithstanding, the functioning of the Embassy was seriously affected by a high turnover of locally recruited semi-skilled and unskilled staff. Their resignations were mainly prompted by personal considerations as they sought more lucrative areas of employment. However, those who remained were seriously affected by the rising cost of living in Suriname and active consideration should be given to increased emoluments within the limits of our financial resources.

EMBASSY ACTIVITIES

Commemoration Ceremony

On the occasion of the second anniversary of the death of the late Dr. Cheddi Jagan, the Embassy arranged a special service on March 22, 1999, on the lawns of the Chancery. The evening's proceedings were addressed by Ambassador Arjun who shared the lead-table with Pastor Cedric Singh, a long standing follower of the late president. The large

number of Guyanese nationals and friends were taken on a journey down memory lane and shared some intimate and interesting reflections with the speakers.

Independence Celebrations

The Embassy arranged a social event on the evening of May 25, when members of the diplomatic and consular corps, nationals and friends braved the inclement weather to mark our 33rd Independence Anniversary.

Circle of Friends

The Guyana Embassy established its chapter of the Circle of Friends for the Promotion of the New Global Human Order in July, 1999. At the first meeting a Steering Committee was formed under the Chairmanship of Dr. Joseph Edwards, Director of local office of the Organisation of American States (OAS). The Committee drafted a document on the Aims and Objectives and modus operandi for the 'Circle'. Elections were held on November 6, Ambassador Arjune was elected chairman of the Management Committee and the First Secretary was appointed by the Embassy's representative. The Board subsequently met and planned a programme for the new millennium which included a panel discussion on the Concept of the New Global Human Order to coincide with the Death Anniversary of the late President Jagan.

Annual Fair

The Embassy held its Annual Fair on the laws of the Chancery on Saturday November 11, 1999. The event was a resounding success, and attracted a large number of Guyanese and Surinamese patrons who were entertained by a cultural show of the highest standard, presented by groups of professional performers and included, representatives from the Indian Cultural Centre and the Amerindian and Javanese Associations in Paramaribo. Proceeds from the Fair were channelled towards the Annual Children's Christmas party.

Ladies Bazaar

The Embassy participated in the Annual Diplomatic Ladies Bazaar on November 29. Apart from providing an opportunity for show-casing Guyanese products, the Embassy contributed 150,000 Guilders to the charitable effort.

CONSULAR AND NOTARIAL FUNCTIONS

Issuance of Passports, Visas, Police Clearances, Marriage and Birth Certificate etc.
(January 1- December 31, 1999)

Blank Passports received (Jan-Dec. 1999)	1,035
Applications for new Passports	839
Applications for renewal of Passports	890
Requests for Emergency Certificates	139
Passport endorsements	176
Applications for Birth Certificates	156
Applications for Police Clearances	59
Applications for Marriage Certificates	35
Marriage Declarations	85
Declarations of Oath	6
Affidavits issued	45
Number of Deaths reported	7
Requests for General Assistance	120
Immigration problems (detained Guyanese)	40
Airline/Ferry problems (stranded Guyanese)	20
Foreigners requesting information on Guyana	85
Miscellaneous: purchasing of newspapers forms, information on consular matter, domestic problems, courtesy calls etc.	30

TORONTO

GUYANA CONSULATE

1999 proved to be a successful year for the Consulate General of the Republic of Guyana in Toronto, Canada. The Consulate continued to pursue the promotion of trade and investment opportunities for Guyana, resource mobilisation and the provision of a wide array of consular services to Guyanese living in Central and Western Canada.

The Mission continued to monitor Canada's political, economic and social climate and regular updates on important issues were dispatched to the Ministry as a means of assisting in the exercise of an informed and pro-active foreign policy for Guyana.

The year in review witnessed changes of staffing at the most senior levels.

Among the major achievements of the year was the significant progress realised in the computerisation of the Consulate and the increased use of the Consulate's web site to promote awareness and the development of Guyana.

The launching of the Cheddi Jagan Lecture Series at York University served to further promote the concept of the New Global Human Order. Another achievement was the continued fostering of closer relations with the Guyanese community in the Greater Toronto Area in an effort to maximise the contribution of the Guyanese diaspora to nation building.

Consulate Issues

Administration

- 1999 witnessed major changes to the staffing of the Consulate.
- Mrs. Taveta Hariff, FSO III, assumed duty at the Consul on January 11, 1999.
- Ms. Asha Gafar assumed duty as Consular Officer on May 17, 1999.
- Ms. Zita Seetram, Vice Consul of the Consulate completed her tour of duty at the

end of August 1999.

- Ms. Seetram was posted as a PSM Student Affairs Officer but also assisted the Consulate in the issue of passports.
- The employment of Mr. Arundel Rahubir, Office Assistant, ended on October 18, 1999.

Office Expansion

Office expansion of 250 ft., which was approved in May, was completed on June 5. The office expansion provided for an additional office and an enlarged storage area.

Consulate's Website

The Consulate established a website to provide information on trade, investment, community and general information on Guyana. The site is located at Guyana consulate. Com and averages about 17 hits per day. The site is regularly updated with current information as well as consular information.

Economic Issues

Trade and Investment

Economic diplomacy continued to be the focus of the Consulate's activities. A large volume of information was circulated to persons interested in Guyana. The Consulate also devoted much energy to Guy Expo '99, which unfortunately was postponed.

A comprehensive survey of existing trade and possible trade in agricultural produce and fishery from Guyana to Canada was executed in January 1999. The findings and recommendations were submitted to the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Industry of Guyana. The issues of concern hampering the sale of agricultural produce in Toronto from Guyana continue to be the reliability and cost of transportation, and to a lesser extent, the reliability of

supply, the quality and the cold storage facilities at the airport.

The Consulate continued to promote investment as a priority. The main areas of interest during the year were agriculture, tourism, lumber, fishery, gold and diamond. Meetings were conducted regularly with potential investors and general trade and investment opportunities were explained to interested persons. Summarized below are the main investment related cases for 1999. Many other persons were assisted in importing items from Guyana on a straightforward basis.

Proposal for Light and Bed Manufacturing Facility in Guyana.

Mr. Kim Motiram of Ontario requested the Consulate's assistance in the establishment of a Light and Bed Manufacturing Facility in Guyana. He visited Guyana and met with Go-Invest Officials in March/April 1999. Mr. Motiram was advised by Go-Invest that his proposal is under the active consideration of the Minister of Finance. Mr. Motiram has expressed strong discontent about a bond of \$800,000.00, which he was asked to pay to register his Company at Customs and Excise, and about the delays encountered with his Project. Mr. Motiram is at present working along with Go-Invest.

Proposal for Raising Red Tilapia in Guyana

Mr. Abdefatah A. Awad, a Sudanese National, residing in Saudi Arabia, approached the Consulate for guidance with reference to setting up a red tilapia farm in Guyana. The Minister of Fisheries, Crops and Livestock, Mr. Satyadeo Sawh had agreed to meet with Mr. Awad. However, Mr. Awad did not visit Guyana because he was uncertain whether he could adequately finance the venture. The Consulate needs to be informed precisely on the minimum amount of money required for investment.

Fort Island Resort

Mr. and Mrs. Haniff, owners of the Fort Island Resort Resort, experienced delays in

obtaining confirmation of approval from the Ministry of Finance for the final items to be shipped for their resort. The Ministry of Finance has not responded to date to inquiries made by the Consulate on behalf of Mr. and Mrs. Haniff.

Lumber

Mr. Chris Sanapi of Montreal, Canada visited Guyana in November 1999, to discuss investment in Guyana in the Forestry Sector. The Consulate assisted Mr. Sanapi with respect to this visit. He met with Go-Invest and discussions were held with businessmen concerning the setting up a sawmill in Guyana. Mr. Sanapi is currently working on this project.

Other Promotional Issues

Reception for TAG

The Consulate hosted a reception in honour of the Tourism Association of Guyana, the Representatives of the Caribbean Tourism Organisation and local travel agents on April 23. The event was a success and facilitated the exchange of information and the establishment of contacts between tour operators and travel agents.

Launching of Guyana Business Association

Efforts are on-going with the representatives of the business Community to launch a Guyana Business Association to promote business in Guyana and to provide business in Guyana and to provide networking opportunities between the Community and Guyana.

Odessa David

The consulate facilitated Odessa David's visit to Trinidad for postoperative care.

Odessa received a heart operation in Toronto four years ago from the Toronto Sick Children's Hospital. The visit was coordinated by the Consulate and paid for by the Ministry of Health and Labour with contributions from a community organisation in Toronto.

Consular Visit to Alberta, British Colombia and Manitoba

The Honorary Consul General paid a highly successful official visit to the three Western provinces where he met with the Guyanese Communities and potential investors. The Honorary Consul General used the opportunity to update the Communities on events relating to Guyana.

The following were major activities coordinated by the Guyana Consulate

Launching of Jagan Lectures

Her Excellency Janet Jagan, as then President of the Republic of Guyana paid a brief week-end visit to Toronto to deliver the inaugural lecture of the "Jagan Lectures" under the patronage of President Lorna Marsden of York University, at the Burton Auditorium, York University on March 27, 1999. The President was accompanied by Mr. Kellawan Lall, Political Adviser to the President. The Lecture Series is a major initiative of the community and the Consulate with respect to the promotion of the New Global Human Order.

The Canadian public was invited to attend the inauguration of the lectures in commemoration of the life and work of Dr. Cheddi Jagan and his vision of a New Global Human Order.

The Lecture Series is intended to honour, preserve and promote Dr. Jagan's invaluable legacy to humanity of a vision of a New Global Human Order characterized by social and economic justice. In her Lecture, the President explained that throughout his life Dr. Jagan ardently crusaded for development based on Human rights and Human security where the

peace dividends from the absence of war would lift humanity from the drudgery of poverty. He demonstrated a keen perception of macro economic policies and called for democracy, good governance, debt relief and a war against all kinds of discrimination,

Launching of Book Project

During the second quarter of the year, the Consulate launched a Book Project with the Alumni Organizations and the Ministry of Education. This project will collect and ship one forty-foot container of 55,000-65,000 books to schools in Guyana early in the New Year.

Guyana Independence Celebrations in Toronto

The Guyana Independence Committee comprising of the Guyana Consulate and the Guyanese Community was pleased to once again host the grandest and biggest millennium celebration of Guyana's 34th Independence at the L'Amoreaux Community Recreation Centre, 2000 Manically Avenue, during May 21-24, 1999.

The much hailed Guyanese Independence Festival in Toronto, a pride of the Guyanese Community succeeded over the past year in uniting Guyanese from all walks of life. More than 10,000 Guyanese and friends attended the event.

The celebrations commenced with a conference on May 21, 1999, which focused on issues affecting Guyanese in Canada. The conference was followed by a gala Independence Dance, on May 21, at the L'Amoreaux Centre.

On May 22, the festivities began with a flag raising ceremony and continued with a fun filled day of various activities involving exotic Guyanese Cuisine, Arts and Crafts, a Domino Competition and a Soccer Match. The highlight of the day was a spectacular cultural show featuring top musicians, singers and dancer.

On Sunday 23, at the Centre there was an interfaith Service followed by a reception. The eagerly awaited cricket took place in the afternoon with several top Guyanese players.

The events concluded with a grand finale boat cruise on Monday, May 24.

The Government of Guyana was represented at this year's event by Mr. Navin Chandarpal and Mr. Geoffrey DaSilva.

Reception for Members of the Arts and Crafts Association of Guyana

The Consulate hosted a reception on September 10, 1999 in honour of the members of the Arts and Crafts Association of Guyana who participated in the well-known Canadian Exhibition (CNE). Invitees were given the opportunity to view and purchase the exhibits.

Establishment of a Circle of Friends

The Consulate vigorously embarked on the establishment of the Circle of Friends, in keeping with the late President Jagan's vision of a New Global Human Order.

Meeting and Reception in Honour of Mrs. Yvonne Hinds

The Consulate hosted a meeting and a reception on October 16, 1999 in honour of Mrs. Yvonne Hinds, Chairperson of the National Relief Council of Guyana, and wife of the Hon. Samuel Hinds, Prime Minister of Guyana. Mrs. Hinds met with leaders of Guyanese Organisations to discuss the work of the National Relief Council in Guyana and to explore various avenues through which the Organisations can collaborate and assist the Council.

Consular Representation at Important Events

The Consulate makes it a priority to attend and participate in the events to which it was invited and which would have benefits for Guyana, especially charitable events.

Cooperation with Organisations and Individuals to Assist Guyana

The Consulate continued to assist organisations and individuals desirous of contributing to Guyana. Such organisations included the Peel Guyanese Organisation, which continued to ship medical items to Guyana and the Guyana Pioneer Group, which donates regularly to several charitable institutions in Guyana.

The Consulate also assisted several groups, non-profit Organisations and individuals in clearances of donations, especially medical supplies, for the needy in Guyana.

Matters of concern

The delay by the Ministry of Home Affairs in responding to visa requests forwarded by the consulate continued to be a cause of concern at the Consulate.

Delays in Response from Trade and Related Agencies in Guyana

The Consulate received numerous complaints about the delay in response from the trade and investment agencies in Guyana. The Consulate continued to make unsuccessful efforts to obtain updated promotional information on Guyana.

Deportation

The deportation of Guyanese nationals by Canadian authorities continued to engage the attention of the Consulate. In 1999, 17 Guyanese convicted of criminal offences in Canada were deported. The last seven were deported to Guyana on two private aircrafts chartered by Canadian Immigration without any documentation. The approval by the Ministry of Home Affairs for the request for deportation of thirty six Guyanese nationals is currently being awaited.

Communications and Support Materials

The consulate received relatively little support materials, posters and other promotional materials from the Ministry. This limitation hindered the active promotion of Guyana in several key areas.

Staff Training

Computerization at the mission began in 1994. To date, no budget has been approved for computer training and there has been no formal training. This oversight has affected the work of the Consulate in major ways. A staff member who is proficient in computer usage can increase his/her productivity by more than 25%. The cost of training ranges from \$1,000 - \$1,500 per person. With the cost of staffing varying from \$24,000 to \$60,000 per person, per year, the benefits of computer training are most compelling.

Consular Activities

The Consulate continued to diligently exercise its Consular functions, which includes the following:-

- Protecting the Nationals of Guyana, within the limits of the law.
- Furthering the development of economic and social relations between Guyana and Canada
- Reporting and disseminating information
- Issuing passports, visas and travel document
- Acting as notary and civil registrar
- Providing advice and assistance to nationals in distress. The Consulate has spent much time and energy on this responsibility, which it takes very seriously.

Passports

The following passports, travel documents and visas were issued for the year. The third quarter is usually the peak period for the issuing of passports. There was a noticeable reduction in the issuing of passports in the fourth quarter as compared to previous years.

Month	New Passports	Renewals
January	55	95
February	109	120
March	80	158
April	110	119
May	118	211
June	110	183
July	117	184
August	88	186
September	77	129
October	68	101
November	62	136
December	61	138
Total	1055	1760
Emergency Travel Certificates		185
Visas issued		
India		4
China		3
Venezuela		2
Total		9

WASHINGTON

GUYANA EMBASSY

During 1999 the Embassy forged ahead in promoting and executing Government's priorities at different levels. The Embassy has advanced Guyana's national and international agenda through active collaboration and participation in fora in the USA including the US Administration, the Organisation of American States (OAS), the CARICOM Caucus of Ambassadors, the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the International Monetary Fund and not least, the Guyanese diaspora in Washington, D.C. and other States of the USA.

EMBASSY ACTIVITIES

During 1999, Ambassador Odeen Ishmael engaged in the following activities:

- (a) Meeting on Drugs and Security in the Americas, Costa Rica.
- (b) 16th Meeting of the Summit Implementation Review Group, Dominican Republic.
- (c) OAS General Assembly, Guatemala.
- (d) XXXI Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers of the Organisation of Islamic Conference, Burkina Faso.
- (e) Ambassador's Forum sponsored by the Black Academy of Arts and Letters and the Congressional Black Caucus, Dallas, Texas.
- (f) Distinguished Speakers International Forum on Environment and Human Development, Waynesburg College, University of Pennsylvania.
- (g) Seminar on Debt Relief sponsored by the School of International Relations, State University of New York, Buffalo.
- (h) Guyana Medical Relief Dinner, Los Angeles, California.
- (i) Meeting with the Organisation "Direct Relief International" with the aim of garnering medical supplies and equipment for Guyana.
- (j) Meeting in San Francisco with a wide cross-section of Guyanese.
- (k) FTAA Ministerial, Toronto, Canada.
- (l) World Trade Organisation Ministerial Meeting, Seattle.

- (m) 17th Meeting of the Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG), Washington, D.C.

ORGANISATION OF AMERICAN STATES

Guyana's Delegation was actively involved in the work of the Organisation during the past year particularly in the following Organs:

- (a) Permanent Council.
- (b) The Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI).
- (c) The Permanent Executive Committee of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CEPCIDI).
- (d) Programme, Budget and Evaluation Committee.
- (e) Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Affairs.
- (f) Committee on Hemispheric Security.
- (g) CICAD.
- (g) Sub-Working Group on the Inter-American Agency for Cooperation and Development.

PROJECTS SUBMITTED FOR OAS FUNDING

During the year under review the Mission succeeded in acquiring OAS approval to extend the deadline for the expenditure of funds which were allocated to the Intermediate Savannahs Project. Guyana now has until August, 2000 to utilise the remainder of funds which, according to OAS Regulations, should have been returned as at December 31, 1998.

The news was not so good for the new projects which were submitted in 1999. Of the three projects submitted, only one was approved by the evaluating body (CENPES). This however was put on an alternate list of projects in an order of precedence which is awaiting the availability of funds.

MEETING WITH THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE OAS

Ambassador Ishmael met with Mr. Christopher Thomas, Assistant Secretary General of the OAS on the border controversy between Guyana and Venezuela. Mr. Thomas was briefed on the heightened military activity on the Venezuelan side of the border during the period marking the Anniversary of the 1899 Arbitral Award.

CARICOM AMBASSADORS' CAUCUS

The CARICOM Ambassadors' Caucus met quite regularly to discuss issues of importance to the Region. These sessions were particularly helpful since delegations were able to discuss a number of issues which were not always related to the OAS.

TRADE, TOURISM AND INVESTMENT

TRADE

Over the reporting period, the Embassy continued to initiate action regarding the promotion of trade as well as respond to requests for information on trading opportunities. These efforts have resulted in business opportunities for Guyanese businessmen and were basically concentrated on rice, seafood, indoor and outdoor furniture and timber. In addition, silica, sand and railway sleepers were purchased from Guyana.

It has been observed that this trade in goods is not only destined for American markets. While the prospects are good for the aforementioned products, it is felt that Guyana's trade initiatives should also target the Caribbean population in the USA. In this regard products such as fresh fruits and jams and jellies among others could be marketed in a more aggressive manner. An initial step in this direction would be an appropriate, permanent display at the Embassy of products manufactured in Guyana.

The Embassy along with the Consulates was also active in the promotion of GUYEXPO '99 which was subsequently postponed to the year 2000. Mention ought to be made of the

efforts of the Honorary Consul in Houston who was instrumental in mobilising a team of businessmen to participate in the Exposition. It is anticipated that there would be early communication of the new date of this activity as well as the provision of adequate copies of promotional material to assist the Embassy in contributing to the success of this Exposition.

The Embassy also participated in the Ambassadorial Breakfast Series which informs of trade and investment opportunities in the region and maintained close relations with the Caribbean and Latin American Action group.

TOURISM

Despite several limitations, the Embassy utilised opportunities available to promote Guyana as an eco-tourism destination. The concerns of prospective tourists regarding their personal safety, vis-a-vis domestic disturbances mitigated against greater success.

Throughout the year, the Embassy worked closely with the Privatisation Unit in the divestment of specific Government entities as well as with entrepreneurs in the USA. One such effort resulted in the visit to Guyana in July of two (2) Officials of the Department of Agriculture of the State of Maryland who expressed an interest in sheep farming in the Intermediate Savannahs. Requests were also forwarded to Guyana with respect to investments in the fisheries and telecommunication sectors.

CONCLUSIONS

The efforts of the Embassy in the promotion of trade, tourism and industry can best be described as modest. While there is scope for improvement there is also the need for the provision of the necessary infrastructure to facilitate such improvements.

The Mission has tried to keep up with demands for information in particular but there is still a pressing need for quicker and easier access to Guyana's Laws and Regulations in this area. In this regard urgent action needs to be taken to establish an up-to-date data base by the appropriate authorities in Guyana and for the Mission to be able to have access to such a data base.

CONSULAR ACTIVITIES

Consular activities for the year 1999 continued with the issuance of passports; authentication of documents; the issuance of Emergency Certificates, Birth Certificates, Visas and Police Clearances.

The Consular Section participated in the Embassy Adoption programme with the District of Colombia Public Schools, the Duke Ellington School of Performing Arts and the Washington Performing Arts Society.

The Section was also involved in activities of the Congressional Youth Leadership Council which was established by the President of the United States of America. Students of the National Young Leaders Conference visited the Embassy and met with the Ambassador and Members of Staff for a briefing.

During 1999 the Embassy expanded its activities in publicising Guyana and its people. There was a marked increase in the amount of schools visiting the Embassy and a rise in the number of students selecting Guyana for school projects.

Unfortunately the Embassy is limited in its response capabilities to requests for materials and information and cannot always meet the numerous queries from schools and students themselves.

MEETING WITH GUYANESE ORGANISATIONS

The Embassy met with Guyanese Groups with the dual purpose of discussing matters of interest to the Guyanese community and updating them on topical events. Among some of the activities undertaken were planning meetings for Guyana's Independence Day Celebrations and a discussion forum on the Constitution Reform Process. With respect to the former, a Food Fair and Cultural Presentation was held on the lawns of the Official Residence of Guyana's Ambassador.

MISSION AUDIT

The Mission's Accounts were audited during the period August 3-6, 1999 by Mr. Lennie Razac, Deputy Auditor General (ag.). The Audit Report was favourable and commended the Mission for, *inter alia*, its up-to-date record-keeping. Nevertheless, there were some recommendations regarding allocations for Sub-Heads which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs needs to take into account.

FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

The Mission's financial responsibilities, *vis-a-vis* other Missions were carried out with despatch. Bank transfers were done in a timely manner after notification from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Mission continued in maintaining records of expenditure which would account for funds received and to submit timely and accurate financial statements to its various accounting superiors.